

Braille Monitor



SEPTEMBER, 1982

VOICE OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND



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THE BRAILLE MONITOR

PUBLICATION OF THE
NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND

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THE BRAILLE MONITOR

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THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND

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LETTERS FOR THE PRESIDENT, ADDRESS CHANGES,
SUBSCRIPTION REQUESTS, AND ORDERS FOR NFB LITERATURE,
ARTICLES FOR THE MONITOR AND LETTERS TO THE EDITOR
SHOULD BE SENT TO THE NATIONAL OFFICE

* * *

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RICHARD EDLUND, *Treasurer*
NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND
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* * *

If you or a friend would like to remember the National Federation of the Blind in your will, you can do so by employing the following language:

"I give, devise, and bequeath unto National Federation of the Blind, a District of Columbia nonprofit corporation, the sum of \$____ (or "____ percent of my net estate" or "the following stocks and bonds: ____") to be used for its worthy purposes on behalf of blind persons."

* * *

THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND IS NOT AN ORGANIZATION
SPEAKING FOR THE BLIND — IT IS THE BLIND SPEAKING FOR THEMSELVES

ISSN 0006-8829

THE 1982 NATIONAL CONVENTION IN REVIEW

During the first week of July at the Leamington Hotel in Minneapolis we had what was universally acclaimed as the most exciting, most upbeat, most informative, most enthusiastic, and all around best convention we have ever had in the history of the National Federation of the Blind. It started on the previous Thursday and Friday with the arrival of hundreds of delegates (Friday now having replaced Saturday as the heaviest arrival date), and it continued into the first scheduled activity—the seminar for parents and educators of blind children, which was held Saturday, July 3rd. Sponsored by the Committee on Parental Concerns and the NFB Teachers Division, the seminar was attended by almost 300 people. There were parents from throughout the country, many of whom had never attended a Federation convention.

Registration got underway Sunday morning, July 4, and before the end of the day more than a thousand people had registered. There were the usual exhibits and committee meetings, but somehow this year seemed special. Perhaps it was the harmony and enthusiasm; perhaps it was the sense of accomplishment of the past year; or perhaps it was simply the feeling that we had fully come of age as a movement and were ready to meet the challenges and take the responsibilities of the future. Whatever it was, it permeated the whole convention, and it was unmistakable.

The tone of the convention was set at the Board Meeting Monday morning. Both joy and determination were evident as the Board discussed and passed Resolution 82–101, which formalized and put into

writing the policy we have followed for years: We are not a confederacy, not a fragmented group of separate state and local organizations. We are an indivisible national movement, with the sovereignty resting in the national body. That is the way we want it, and that is the way we intend to have it. The members of the Board, the state officers and delegates, and the more than one thousand cheering Federationists in the room made it clear for all who care to understand. This is our movement, our Federation—and we do not intend to allow others to determine for us how we shall function, what sort of structure we shall have, or how we shall manage our business. We mean to do that for ourselves. This was the message of the Monday morning Board Meeting, and it was a joyous message, pervading the entire convention.

Divisions and committees met Monday afternoon and Monday evening, and the general sessions began Tuesday. The details of the convention will be covered during this and following issues of the *Monitor*. Only the highpoints will be mentioned here: the adoption of the new chartering system by a vote of 51 to 0 by the delegates Tuesday morning; the Presidential Report Tuesday afternoon, outlining the accomplishments of the past year; and the appearances of Congressman Peter Rodino, Chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, and Senator Howard Metzenbaum, who successfully sponsored our voting rights bill. Then, of course, there was William Gallagher, Executive Director of the American Foundation for the Blind. His presentation and his attempt to duck

questions could hardly be called a highlight, but the performance was certainly illuminating.

There were all of the other things that filled the week and made it the wonderful experience it was. The reception Tuesday evening, the elections Wednesday morning, the report from the National Library Service, and the address by Gerald Kass (Executive Vice President of the Jewish Braille Institute of America).

This was a year for the election of officers, as well as a majority of the members of the Board of Directors. President Jernigan was re-elected to a two-year term, as were First Vice President Don Capps and Treasurer Dick Edlund. Diane McGeorge, the dynamic President of the NFB of Colorado, was moved from Board Member to the Second Vice Presidency; and Rami Rabby was elected Secretary. As Immediate Past President, Ralph Sanders continued on the Board of Directors. Sterling France of New York, Norman Gardner of Idaho, and Allen Harris of Michigan were elected to the Board last year, and their terms do not expire until 1983. The remaining year of the position left vacant by the resignation of Al Evans of Massachusetts was filled by the election of Howard May, President of the NFB of Connecticut. Bob Eschbach of Ohio, Peggy Pinder of Iowa, and Joyce Scanlan of Minnesota were returned to the Board for two-year terms. New Board Members elected for two-year terms were Glenn Crosby of Texas and Steve Benson of Illinois. Beth Bowen, the long-time leader of the Florida affiliate, went off the Board this year, as did Lawrence (Muzzy) Marcelino, who had served as Secretary since 1970. Both Beth Bowen and Muzzy Marcelino were universally recognized as having made extremely valuable contributions during their tenure on the Board. It goes without saying that

they will continue as leaders in the movement and that their contributions will be undiminished.

Wednesday noon witnessed a first in the history of the Federation. Promptly at twelve o'clock the room changed from a convention hall to a wedding chapel. The bride and groom were David Walker of Michigan and Betty Bator (formerly of New York) but now also of Michigan. Reverend Howard May officiated, and the entire Federation audience made up the wedding party. David Stayer, President of the NFB of New York, added both solemnity and joy to the occasion by his beautiful singing.

Wednesday afternoon was given to tours, committee meetings, individual meetings and conferences, and various social gatherings, both serious and otherwise.

Thursday morning we were back in the general sessions. There was a report on our work with the blind of Zambia; there was an item on the education of blind children by Dr. Baron Holmes, IV, President of the South Carolina School for the Deaf and Blind; The Management of the Diabetic Patient with Kidney Disease and Blindness by Dr. John Najarian, Chief of Surgery, University of Minnesota Hospital; and a report from the federal Department of Justice by Robert D'Agostino, Deputy Assistant Attorney General on changes in guidelines, enforcement, and prospects for civil rights for the blind.

Thursday afternoon we dealt with Social Security. Our speaker was Mr. Paul B. Simmons, Deputy Commissioner for External Affairs. Then, we heard from Congressman Barry M. Goldwater, Jr., on new legislation concerning sheltered workshops and the employment of the blind in industry. This was followed by an address by Virginia H. Knauer, Special Assistant to President Reagan. The next item on the

Thursday afternoon program was presented by Philip E. Peterson, Director of the Michigan Commission for the Blind and President-Elect of the National Council of State Agencies for the Blind. He spoke on Services for the Blind in the 1980's: Structure and Function of the State Agency, Relations with the Organized Blind, and Impact of the New Federalism.

As is traditional, Thursday evening was the time for the annual banquet. And what a banquet it was! Besides the address by President Jernigan, there were awards to Congressman Goldwater, to the International Telephone and Telegraph Corporation for its joint work with us in Zambia, and to Ray and Diane McGeorge for being the wonderful, caring people they are and for the many things they continue to do to advance our cause and make opportunities available for the blind.

Friday we heard from Rosie Hurwitz, Director of the Kansas Audio Reader Network and President of the Association of Radio Reading Services, which is the national organization of radio reading services for the blind throughout the country. Then, we had a report from our Director of Governmental Affairs, Jim Gashel. He reviewed for us developments in Washington and in the states. The rest of Friday was taken up with resolutions, reports, and the general business of the organization.

A JOB seminar was held on Saturday. It was attended by almost 200 people and showed the same enthusiastic give and take which had characterized the rest of the week's activities.

There were moments of deep emotion, times of shared triumph and mutual sadness. Early in the week Janie Baker of Birmingham, Alabama, (80 years of age and attending her fifth national convention) suddenly became ill and died. She was the

aunt of Margaret Hutton, a long-time leader of our Alabama affiliate. With her at the convention were two great nieces and one great nephew.

The winners of the Associates contest were Allen (Sandy) Sanderson, Alaska, first place; Tom Stevens, Missouri, second place; Dale Hamm, Alabama, third place; and Karen Mayry, South Dakota, fourth place. Ralph Sanders with 104 Associates and Sharon Gold with 99 were close contenders. Sandy Sanderson made it known that he intended to win next year's contest and wished to challenge all comers. As he said, "The bear has spoken." Speaking of awards, the vendors held a special luncheon for Jim Gashel on Tuesday, and Alaska presented him with a special award at the banquet. The presentation was made by Sandy Sanderson and Don Lutz.

Among other highlights were these: Mark Dayton, Minnesota's Democratic candidate for U.S. Senate, came to speak to the convention. He said that if he were elected, he would hold regular meetings with our representatives to get input from the blind. Former Senator Eugene McCarthy also paid us a visit. Ken Crane of Colorado won an expense paid trip to next year's convention in Kansas City from the Hopkins Travel Agency. Recruiting for the Pre-Authorized Check Plan (PAC) was at an all-time high. We passed the \$200,000 mark—hopefully never to slide below it again. As of the end of the convention, 895 people were signed up on the PAC Plan, with total giving of \$17,620.50 per month, or an average pledge of \$19.68 per month. This means that the total annualized pledge as of the end of the convention was \$211,446—the highest we have ever had.

Then, of course, there is the fact that Governor Albert Quie proclaimed July, 1982, National Federation of the Blind Month in Minnesota. It was the frosting on

the cake. It shows how far we have come and symbolizes the recognition we are everywhere receiving. The same is true of this year's media coverage. The newspaper stories and the radio and television appearances were frequent and positive. Never have we had such thorough and accurate coverage.

This is an outline of the convention schedule and activities, but it cannot possibly capture the flavor and excitement of it all—the committees and seminars, the

fun in the Waikiki Room, the exhilaration of those who were attending their first convention (and there were many), the renewal of friendships, the pride of accomplishment, and the feeling of a new era of hope and promise at the threshold. It was wonder and joy and renewal and hard work and information and closeness—and it was something which transcended all of that. It was an unforgettable experience. It was the 1982 convention of the National Federation of the Blind.

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND MONTH

PROCLAIMED IN MINNESOTA

* * * * *

STATE OF MINNESOTA

PROCLAMATION

Whereas: The National Federation of the Blind has long been committed to promoting self-expression and collective action among blind persons; and

Whereas: Today, the Federation is the largest and oldest organization of blind persons with more than fifty thousand members nationwide working to secure equal rights and increased opportunities for the blind; and

Whereas: Federationists strive to educate the public to more positive attitudes toward blindness so that the stereotypes and misconceptions about blindness will be removed and will be replaced by a more constructive and realistic approach to blindness; and

Whereas: Blind persons also receive assistance through the Job Opportunities for the Blind (JOB) program operated by the National Federation of the Blind; and

Whereas: The National Federation of the Blind serves as an advocate for blind persons seeking equal rights under State and Federal law and has led the way in promoting legislation to guarantee these rights to blind persons in White Cane Laws passed by many states, including Minnesota; and

Whereas: The National Federation of the Blind will hold its forty-second annual convention in Minneapolis during the week of July 4-9;

Now, therefore, I, Albert H. Quie,

Governor of the State of Minnesota, do hereby proclaim the month of July, 1982 to be **NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND MONTH** *in Minnesota, and have asked Lieutenant Governor Lou Wangberg to prepare this proclamation for my signature and disseminate the same.*

In witness whereof, we have hereunto set our hands and caused the Great Seal of the State of Minnesota to be affixed this first day of July in the year of our Lord one

thousand nine hundred and eighty-two and of the State the one hundred twenty-fourth.

Albert H. Quie
Governor

Lou Wangberg
Lieutenant Governor

Joan Anderson Grove
Secretary of State

PRESIDENTIAL REPORT

*National Federation of the Blind
Minneapolis, Minnesota
July 6, 1982*

by KENNETH JERNIGAN

This has been a year of severe challenge, tremendous accomplishment, and unbelievable acceleration. Perhaps as good a measure as any of the increasing recognition our movement is receiving can be found in the actions of state government and other elected officials.

In the summer of 1981 the Governor of Washington started a trend. He proclaimed June as National Federation of the Blind Month in Washington. The Governor of Maryland followed suit by proclaiming July, 1981, National Federation of the Blind Month in Maryland.

September brought a variation on the theme. The State Senate of New Hampshire passed a resolution congratulating and commending the Federation for its work in behalf of the blind. The Governor of

Connecticut proclaimed November, 1981, National Federation of the Blind Month in that state, and in December of 1981 the Council of the County of Hawaii passed a resolution commending the Federation for its work. In January of 1982 the Governor of Idaho proclaimed National Federation of the Blind Month.

Now, we have a triple header. The month of May, 1982, was proclaimed National Federation of the Blind Month by the Mayor of Washington, D.C.; the Governor of South Dakota; and the Governor of New Mexico. As you heard earlier today, July, 1982, is (by proclamation of the Governor) National Federation of the Blind Month here in Minneapolis. These proclamations provide graphic evidence of our accelerating momentum. They tell of the

recognition which our movement is receiving and of our progress toward first-class citizenship.

These external signs of advancement are matched by what we are doing internally at the National Center for the Blind. Last fall the Jacobus tenBroek Fund started a remodeling program in what had been the unassigned area on the top floor of the building. That program (costing somewhat more than \$350,000) provides us with fourteen additional bedrooms; a large multipurpose room (called the Harbor Room) with a fireplace, kitchen facilities, and meeting area; an exercise room, complete with bathroom facilities and showers; and an enclosed fire stair and improved fire escapes. This means that we can intensify our seminar program training and that we have increased flexibility to handle meetings, conferences, and additional training. The building does not belong to the government or any agency. It belongs to us, the blind—and more and more every day it is THE National Center for the Blind.

The remodeling to which I have just referred is virtually finished, and it is paid for. However, before the heating season next winter the boiler must be replaced, and a new heating system must be installed throughout the complex. Some of the work is already done, and the rest is in progress. The program for putting in new windows throughout the remainder of the building is contracted for and virtually finished. The heating system for the largest tenant, Stylecraft, (the company that rents 50,000 square feet from the Jacobus tenBroek Fund) is contracted for and well underway. Again, the money has been set aside to handle the costs involved in this work.

This is progress, indeed! But we still have to get through a financial crunch. The bottom floor of the building must be

remodeled and heated to make it suitable for a tenant or for our own expansion. The same is true of the floor (all 40,000 square feet of it) immediately below the space we now occupy. We must also replace that portion of the heating in our own space which has been handled by the boiler. All of this work must be done and it must be done before the heating season next winter. In addition, the electrical service and the wiring in the building must be modernized and improved. All of this should cost something over \$375,000, and we must find a way to get the money to do it—and we will find the way.

We are dealing with one-time expenditures, and when we finish, what a tremendous facility we will have! In fact, as those of you who have been there know, what a tremendous Center we already have! It is not simply heating, pipes, wiring, bricks, and mortar. It is the means of bringing better lives to the blind of this country. It encourages our friends, impresses our opponents, and symbolizes our growing strength and pride of accomplishment as a movement. It means something to be a member of the National Federation of the Blind, and our National Center is a tangible embodiment—of what we have already achieved, and of what we intend to achieve; of the deeds of yesterday, and the dreams of tomorrow.

Yes, it will require sacrifice to raise the money we need to finish the work at the National Center for the Blind, but we will do it. We always keep our promises—to our friends, to our opponents, and (yes) to ourselves. We will finish what we have started at the National Center for the Blind—not only the building but also the concept and the dream.

During the past year we have been more active and made more accomplishments than ever before in our history. And not

just the leaders—but the whole organization, the grass roots of the movement, the individual members. In the upcoming August issue of the *Monitor* you will read about one such member, Charles Biebl. Through his efforts we have already appeared on several regional and local radio and television programs. Next month we will be featured for a half hour on Focus on the Family, a nationwide radio program which is aired on more than 300 stations throughout the country. We have also been invited to appear on Conversations at Wingspread, another nationwide thirty minute program.

During the past year we have sent out more than half a million pieces of Braille, recorded, and print literature to educate the public and inform the blind. This is in addition to the widespread distribution of our monthly magazine the *Monitor*. As most of you know, we now send the *Monitor* to every congressional office and to every agency for the blind in the nation. It also reaches the great majority of the active blind people of the country. The *Monitor* is, beyond question, the most influential publication in the affairs of the blind today. Our books and publications are being placed in ever growing numbers in the schools and public libraries of the nation. It is an investment in the long-term change of public attitudes.

We have also continued to distribute aids and appliances and to pioneer and encourage the development of technology. Above all, we have tried to see that blind persons get new technology at reasonable prices. The talking clock and the talking calculator are good examples. Some of the agencies began by selling these at retail prices. We got ourselves declared distributors. You know the rest of the story. We sell the talking clock at \$58 and the talking calculator at fifty. As of June 1, 1982, we had

distributed a total of 3,346 talking clocks and 1,701 talking calculators. In the exhibit hall you will find newer models of both clock and calculator, as well as a great variety of other aids, appliances, and new technology. We are not primarily in the business of distributing aids and appliances—but we are in the business of making life better for blind people, and this is one way we do it.

JOB (Job Opportunities for the Blind)—a project we operate in partnership with the United States Department of Labor. Last fall we succeeded in getting JOB funded for another year, and we hope to do the same again this fall. In addition to our JOB staff in the National Office we have a Volunteer Field Service Network of almost a hundred people throughout the country. We provide information. We provide stimulation and encouragement. We help employers learn about the capabilities of the blind. We get employers and blind applicants together, and we cross state lines to do it. It is the only project of its kind in the country—and it works. Between February and July of this year we helped more than sixty blind persons find competitive employment at a rate above the minimum wage. The figures speak for themselves.

During the past year we have sent teams to do organizing, revitalizing, and strengthening of state affiliates in Vermont, Alabama, Maine, Oklahoma, South Dakota, and Delaware. As a result, we have better affiliates, more members, and a stronger National Federation of the Blind.

Recently we have had a number of overseas visitors at the National Center for the Blind—including the head of the World Organization for the Prevention of Blindness, an official of the Australian organization of the blind, and representatives from Zambia. Speaking of Zambia, we have (in conjunction with Access for the Handi-

capped and the International Telephone and Telegraph Corporation) conducted a project to teach mobility to the blind of that country. Late last year we sent Harold Snider and Sister Sue Micich to Zambia to teach mobility and the necessary related skills and confidence to blind persons and potential teachers of the blind. The government of Zambia expressed its official appreciation, and the blind of Zambia have better lives as a result of the project. Yes, the blind can teach mobility skills to the blind. We did it in Zambia, and an enlarged team of our members will return this summer to continue the project—but through bureaucracy—but directly, people to people.

An official of top management of ITT is slated to be here with us at the Banquet Thursday night, and I think we can count on increasing understanding, support, and job opportunities from the Company. As an example, consider the case of Susie Spigle, one of our own members and a leader of our New York affiliate. Susie has a degree in hotel management from Cornell University, but she is only employed as a reservations clerk in a Sheraton Hotel. Sheraton is a subsidiary of ITT, which is one of the top ten multinational corporations in the world. As a result of our work with ITT on the Zambia project, Susie is being given three months leave with pay to go to Zambia this summer; and ITT has promised that when she gets back, she will be promoted to a job in management. Susie is in the room this afternoon. This is the kind of progress we are making. This is what the National Federation of the Blind is about.

During the past year we have continued our efforts to bring about reform in the sheltered workshops. At the close of last year's convention we were getting ready for an NLRB ordered election at the Arkansas

Lighthouse for the Blind to determine whether the workers there wanted to be represented by a union. Over ninety percent of the workers had signed cards. Then, the Arkansas Lighthouse turned on such pressure and used such tactics that the election was lost. We have filed unfair labor practice charges and have asked the NLRB to issue a bargaining order. There should be a hearing later this summer. The Lighthouse is fighting hard. So are we and the workers. In the meantime Lighthouse Director Billie Day has resigned (or, as he puts it, "retired"). We will hang in.

The Houston Lighthouse for the Blind: We got the NLRB to order an election. We won the election. The Houston Lighthouse refused to bargain and went to the federal Court of Appeals in the Fifth Circuit. We lost. The court said that the Houston Lighthouse was exempt from collective bargaining. They didn't have workers; they had clients.

In the meantime things were happening in Cincinnati. That case has been going on for years. Blind workers were being paid as little as fifty-eight cents an hour and were otherwise being exploited by the Cincinnati Association for the Blind. The National Labor Relations Board took jurisdiction and ordered an election. We won the election. The Cincinnati Association went to the federal Court of Appeals in the Sixth Circuit. National Industries for the Blind and NAC (the National Accreditation Council for Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Handicapped) joined with them in fighting us. They used federal tax subsidies, charitable contributions, and money wrung from the sweat of underpaid blind workers to fight us; but we beat them hands down. The court's decision has only recently been given. You can read about it in the *July Monitor*.

Now, we have gone back to the Fifth

Circuit and asked the court to reconsider the Houston case. I am pleased to tell you that it has just been decided in our favor. The court's original order has been vacated, and there will be a complete rehearing of the case this fall. The Cincinnati Association for the Blind and our other agency opponents have been asking that the order in Cincinnati be delayed and that the Supreme Court consider the case. We are opposing this, and in view of the action taken in the Fifth Circuit I think we have a good chance of winning.

There may soon be a union in the Cincinnati shop—and also in Houston—and maybe even in Arkansas. No more subminimum wages. No more exploitation and treating the blind like slaves or cattle. No wonder the custodial agencies hate us. No wonder they try to besmirch our character and attack our organization and its leaders. Well, let them! We won't stop until every blind person in this country (including those who work in sheltered shops) have the rights and privileges enjoyed by other American citizens. That's why we have a National Federation of the Blind.

We have bills in both the House and the Senate requiring that no blind person may be paid less than the minimum wage. We have more cosponsors in the House than ever before. When Senator Tsongas introduced our minimum wage bill in the Senate, the American Council of the Blind wrote him opposing it—which, I suppose, speaks for itself. Jim Gashel will give you more details about our legislative efforts later in the convention. I want to mention one more bill concerning sheltered shops. The bill rewrites the Javits Wagner-O'Day Act, which is the law that allows sheltered shops to get noncompetitive contracts from the federal government. Our bill is called the Jobs and Business Opportunities for the Handicapped Act of 1982, and it has been

introduced in the House of Representatives by Congressman Barry Goldwater, Jr. He will be here at the convention Thursday. Ralph Sanders and Jim Gashel put this bill together. We are working to get sponsors in the Senate and expect to have exciting news shortly. The fact that the bill is a good one is evidenced by the howl which is going up from the sheltered shops throughout the country. As might be expected, they are centering their attacks on me personally and on other Federation leaders. Well, that's fine! Let them do it!

Speaking of legislation, there was recently a threat to Free Reading Matter mailing privileges for the blind. As you know, we mounted a campaign. We were successful. Free Reading Matter (at least, for the moment) is safe.

Then, there is the Kennelly bill. Many of the agencies working with the blind in this country say that, because we will not support them across the board in their requests for more and more money (regardless of the kind of services they give), we are not positive and constructive. We have said that we wish to support good agencies and not bad ones, that more money does not necessarily mean more services to blind people, and that (in the spirit of the times) we must find new and innovative approaches. I am about to give you an example of what we mean. Ordinarily items are not allowed to be sold at rest stops or other places on the right of way of an interstate highway. Two years ago the Federal Highway Act (this is not the exact name of the bill) was amended to permit an experiment allowing five states (Massachusetts, Kentucky, Georgia, Connecticut, and California) to make such sales. Only Connecticut chose to permit the state agency for the blind to operate the program. Last year (at the very beginning of the experiment) the Connecticut agency

received upwards of \$200,000. With the pressure for funds for highways—and in view of the fact that four of the five states in the experiment chose not to give the program to the state agency for the blind—it is not difficult to see what the trend would likely be in any continuation or expansion of the experiment.

This year we went to Representative Kennelly and asked that the Surface Transportation Assistance Act of 1982 (and this is the exact title of the bill) be amended to permit vending machine sales on interstate highway right of ways in all of the states and that it be required that only the rehabilitation agency serving the blind in each state could operate the sales program. The bill has passed the Committee on Public Works and Transportation and is now awaiting action by the House. Our amendment did not receive a single opposing vote. Senator Randolph and Senator Stafford have agreed to help us with this legislation in the Senate, and there seems every likelihood that it will pass.

This is an example of what we mean by positive and innovative action: The blind are helped; business is stimulated; and no extra appropriations are needed from the federal treasury. The legislation is in keeping with the spirit of the times, and it offers a means of financing not only vending but other programs for the blind as well. And yet some of the agencies tell us that we are not positive. Well, what were they doing all this time? This, too, is what the National Federation of the Blind is about—striving to see that blind people have opportunity and doing it in a way that will work.

Later this afternoon you will be hearing from Senator Howard Metzenbaum of Ohio. He has worked with us in strengthening voting rights for the blind. There will be more details at the time of Senator Metzenbaum's presentation. I will only say

now that he is our friend and that his presence here is one more proof of it.

I reported last year on our work with blind vendors in the state of Tennessee. That effort has continued, and it continues now. We were instrumental in bringing about improvements in the state regulations governing the vending program. For one thing, vendors who do not get good service on equipment from the state agency may withhold payment of set-aside fees to the state until repairs are made. This is unheard of anywhere else in the country. Recently we went back to the negotiating table. Our earlier participation brought such constructive results that this time both the agency and the vendors asked for Federation help. The negotiations are now virtually completed. Only a few issues remain to be resolved with top level state officials. There are both progress and cooperation. The Tennessee vendors have a meaningful say in all policy decisions, and those who want to will be allowed to buy their facilities and be entirely free from the program.

There have also been individual vendor grievances in Tennessee since our last convention. One involves Lester Davenport, who is at this convention. Lester was placed on probation, and his vending facility at the Tennessee Valley Authority was closed. They wanted him out. We delayed the matter by court action and hearings. The decision at the state level went against us, so Lester is now out of work and waiting for an appeal before an arbitration panel. This has happened because the Tennessee agency refused to stand up and defend Lester before the Tennessee Valley Authority. It is similar to the Jessie Nash case. We won the Nash case, and we intend to win the Davenport case, too.

Then, there is Betty Moffitt. Betty is another Tennessee vendor. I believe that she is also at this convention. Recently we

helped her secure arbitration in a dispute over a promotion she should have had in the Tennessee program. Marc Maurer was a member of the arbitration panel. We won the case, and we won it big. The arbitration order required the state of Tennessee to give Betty a priority over any other vendor in choosing a vending facility any time during the next two years. The panel also ordered the state to pay Betty the sum of \$30,000 because of the income she lost due to the state's failure to grant her the promotion to which she was entitled. Yet, I sometimes hear vendors tell me that they can't see why they should belong to the National Federation of the Blind.

In Alaska we have also worked with the vendors this year. Jim Gashel has been there several times. Sandy Sanderson and Louise Rude have also played an important part in what has been done. The state agency was refusing to allow the vendors to have meaningful input into policy matters. We tried negotiating. It failed. We tried to work with the board which governs the agency—the state board of education. That also failed. Then, we wrote a bill and went to the legislature. And this time we didn't fail. We succeeded. Our bill is now law. It requires the state agency to insure that the vendors have a substantial influence on program policies and procedures. It also opens up new vending facilities in Alaska. Again, this is what the National Federation of the Blind is all about.

In Idaho the Association of Rehabilitation Facilities (that is, sheltered workshops) went to the legislature with a bill designed to take the vending program away from the blind. The bill sought completely to eliminate the Commission for the Blind from the vending program. In Idaho we have a strong Commission and a strong Federation affiliate. They work together. In spite of the efforts of our affiliate and the Commission, the bill (with some

improvements that we managed to get attached to it by amendment) passed the House early in March. The real battle came in the Senate. Norman Gardner led the campaign. He called me on March 17 and told me things looked pretty tough. Within hours Federationists from throughout the country were boarding airplanes for Boise. On March 18 we assembled at the Idaho Statehouse. The bill was coming up in the Senate. We got an amendment to protect the blind priority and to take the very heart out of the bill. When the votes were counted, we stood victorious. If we had allowed this bill to pass in Idaho (and we were the ones who stopped it), it might well have served as a precedent for other states. It could have been the beginning of the end for the vending program for the blind. There are many who ask why other handicapped groups should not have the same preference which we enjoy to operate vending facilities on public property. We answered the question in Idaho—and we answered it successfully.

The name of Jessie Nash is known throughout the country. Two years ago a three-member arbitration panel said that the Georgia agency for the blind had violated the Randolph-Sheppard Act by failing to resist when the United States Marine Corps put Jessie Nash out of her vending facility. The state argued that it was not obligated to protect the business for Mrs. Nash. The panel (which we had caused to be assembled) said that the state did have an obligation. The state of Georgia appealed to the federal courts. On December 28, 1981, the court decided in our favor and ordered the state of Georgia to appeal the Marine Corps action in order to recover the vending facility. Immediately after the court decision the state made noises as if it intended more court action, but it now appears that the state will not fight us further but will abide by the court

order. There are many issues in this case, back pay being one of them. The precedent in the Nash case is important for every blind vendor in the nation, and before we are through, we intend to have total victory.

Dave Shell is from Nevada. I believe he is attending this convention. He is the President of our new Northern Nevada Chapter. Last December the Nevada agency removed him from his vending facility. There were a number of charges. For example, the agency said that Dave refused to permit agency officials to audit his books—but they failed to say that this was the fourth audit in less than a year and that no other vendor was being audited. In other words they were harassing Dave because he wouldn't knuckle under. Dave Shell considered this to be harassment. He stood up for his rights. There was a hearing. The chief hearing officer was the head of the vocational rehabilitation agency, of which the agency for the blind is a division. In other words the agency reviewed its own actions—and, of course, it decided it had done the right thing. Dave Shell lost. He was out of work. He came to the Federation for help. Actually, we found him while doing organizing. Diane McGeorge talked with him. Jim Gashel has filed the arbitration complaint. We are taking the case to the federal level. The hearing will be held shortly, and we mean to win.

Sandy Streeter is a blind Social Security employee in Texas. For several years she worked as a Teleservice Representative and finally reached the stage where there was no opportunity for advancement. She applied for other jobs in Social Security but was not considered. She was interested in doing equal employment opportunity counseling. We obtained evidence that Sandy was being prevented from consideration because of blindness. For one thing, the Commission for the Blind in Texas

reportedly told Social Security that a totally blind person could not do the job of EEO counseling. We filed a discrimination complaint. Today, Sandy is an Equal Employment Opportunity counselor, and she is building a good career for further promotion. This, too, is what the National Federation of the Blind is about.

Federationists will remember that at last year's convention we discussed the case of Joanne Walker, a blind teacher in the schools of West Bend, Wisconsin. We have settled that case, and the school district (while not admitting discrimination) has awarded Joanne Walker back pay in the amount of \$27,000. It will probably be a long time before the West Bend, Wisconsin, School District again engages in unfair employment practices against a blind teacher.

We have had several people apply to be foreign service officers with the U.S. State Department. Don Galloway is the most recent. The State Department has a policy that persons in the foreign service must be able to serve anywhere in the world, and they believe (at least, they say they believe) that blind persons can't do it. So they have designed "medical standards" to keep us out. Don Galloway has passed every other test for employment as a foreign service officer. Moreover, he has served abroad as Director of the Peace Corps in Jamaica. Yet, the State Department turned him down because of their so-called "medical standards." We have helped him file a complaint, and we are working with him on the case.

Donna Yates is a Federation member from Rhode Island. When she wanted to take a cruise on the Costa Cruise Line, she was turned down because of blindness and the fact that she would not be accompanied by a sighted person. She is appealing—and we are helping her. The case is now before the New York State Human Rights

Commission. This is a clear-cut violation of New York law, and we intend to prevail.

Cheryl Finley is a librarian—and a good one, too. Many of you know Cheryl. For eleven years she has worked successfully as an elementary school librarian in Clarion, Iowa. This spring Cheryl was informed that she would have to resign her position and accept a half-time job for the coming school year. The reason given was “budget cuts.” Cheryl is qualified to be either an elementary or a high school librarian, and she had eight years seniority over the high school librarian, who was being retained in a full-time position. She appealed. We helped her. We had reason to believe (and later events proved we were right) that the cut had to do with blindness. The school board ruled against us. They said that the position of high school librarian was different from the position of elementary school librarian and that blindness would be a barrier. Working with the Iowa State Education Association, we prepared to go to court. We let the school know that we would fight the case all the way. So what happened? Cheryl will be working this fall as a full-time high school librarian. Yet, there are those who ask me why we need a National Federation of the Blind.

Last year we talked about Mike Hingson's difficulties with Pacific Southwest Airlines. First Mike was denied boarding in Los Angeles. He was told there was no bulkhead seat for him and his dog Holland. He was told he could take another flight—which he ultimately agreed to do. When he attempted to board, he was physically restrained from moving beyond the bulkhead seats. Then he was bodily ejected from the plane. His hand was injured. His watch was broken. His dog was taken away from him by force. With our assistance Mike filed a lawsuit. We are suing Pacific Southwest for more than a million

dollars. The case will come to trial this fall, and the lawyers tell me they think we have a very good chance of winning.

Joanne Mancinelli is trying to become a teacher in the state of Washington. Last year she was forced to withdraw from student teaching because officials at Western Washington University required her to follow procedures not required of sighted student teachers. For one thing, she was forced to have a sighted aide in the classroom at all times. We helped her file a civil rights complaint. This fall Joanne will student teach again, but this time the conditions will be different—or, more properly speaking, they will NOT be different. They will be the same as required of others. Moreover, the University has agreed to remove all prejudicial material from Joanne's files, and they have agreed to ask the Federation to conduct training seminars for their faculty in order to prevent this type of thing from happening again.

Dr. John Bongiovani is a practicing physician in the state of New York. Gradually, over the past two years, he has become blind. Yet, he has continued to practice medicine competently. Before he began to lose his sight, Dr. Bongiovani was the director of a dialysis clinic. The New York State Health Department has now forced him out of that position, arguing that a blind person cannot perform patient care in a hospital. More recently, state health officials have begun to restrict his private practice as well. The issue may become a licensing question and also a civil rights battle. We are working with the attorneys involved and will fight the battle all the way as the case develops.

Dean Stanzel is a sighted Federationist. He is the husband of Susie Stanzel, one of our chapter presidents in Kansas. Dean works in the federal regional office of the Rehabilitation Services Administration in

Kansas City. His evaluations had always been good, but as his Federation profile became more prominent, he began to receive poor evaluations. It was clear from the record that the problem was anti-Federationism, not lack of excellence in performance. Then there was a demotion and even an attempt to fire Dean. We intervened and took action on Dean's behalf. The demotion and the firing were reversed. Back pay was also awarded. It will probably be a long time before RSA officials again attempt punitive action against Dean Stanzel or any other Federationist without good cause.

In 1979 Joyce Stiff applied for a job with the Census Bureau. At that time she was living in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. She was interested in management and supervisory positions. Although well-qualified, she was not hired. One office said they were out of applications. One person told her that the Census Bureau did not hire the blind. An Equal Employment Opportunity complaint was filed. In the spring of this year there was a hearing before a hearing examiner. Ramona Walhof and John Halverson, the President of our D.C. affiliate, went to Atlanta to provide testimony as experts in matters concerning the employment of the blind. The Census Bureau stood firm, saying that a blind person simply could not perform the jobs they had available. The reports I have indicated that the hearing went well. Briefs have been filed, and we expect a favorable decision. If the decision is not favorable, we will help Joyce make an appeal.

Virginia Reagan applied for a teaching job in the public schools in Thayer, Missouri. She is well-qualified. She has taught successfully. Last spring she was forced to look for a job because of a layoff due to budget cuts. The Thayer schools accepted her for employment. But when she moved to Thayer and school officials

learned she was blind, the deal was off. There was no job. An appeal is now going forward. Gary Wunder, our Missouri President, has helped. Tom Stevens and others at the Missouri agency have also been involved. A hearing was recently held before the school board, and we are waiting for the decision. Should it be unfavorable, we will appeal.

From this list of cases you can see that we have been active during the past year. You can also see why I say it has been the most successful year we have ever had. We have had four leadership seminars at the National Office since last year's convention, and we had an extremely successful March on Washington at the end of January. Our Committee on Parental Concerns is now publishing a magazine, which is rapidly coming to be the tone setter for guidance and information to parents and educators of blind children.

If you have been reading your *Monitor*, you know that we have held several meetings with NAC and the American Foundation for the Blind since last year's convention. I suspect those meetings are now at an end. You will be able to read the final installment in the August *Monitor*. Before we ever started these meetings, I told Mr. Gallagher, the Executive Director of the American Foundation for the Blind, that I thought we had no common ground and, therefore, nothing to talk about. Nevertheless, we came in good faith, hoping to achieve some reform of the agencies and some understanding on their part. When it was clear that the Foundation was getting the worst of it, they tried to delay the meeting scheduled for late 1981 or early this year. The meeting was finally held in May, and the Foundation team walked out. As you will see from the August *Monitor*, there is convincing evidence that they did not come to the meeting in good faith. Nevertheless, we did not withdraw our invi-

tation for Mr. Gallagher to attend today's meeting. At last year's convention he said he wanted to come, and we told him that he could. We keep our word. He can either keep his commitment and speak to us today, or he can pull another of his famous walk-outs. He can have it whichever way he wants it.

As a footnote, Mr. Gallagher sent out one of his famous "memos to the field" after our May meeting. He said that we of the Federation were (as he put it) "recalcitrant." The dictionary tells me that recalcitrant means "obstinately defiant of authority or restraint: stubbornly disobedient. . . . Difficult or impossible to handle or operate: unmanageable." A most revealing word for Mr. Gallagher to use. Yes, he is right. We are not children; we are not subject to his authority; and we are certainly not manageable. Be this as it may, we will hear what Mr. Gallagher has to say, and we will hear him attentively.

In the circumstances it is not surprising that a number of the more custodial governmental and private agencies working with the blind throughout the country attack the Federation as an organization—and that they attack its leaders as individuals. It is a rather transparent attempt to divert attention from their own weaknesses and misdoings. As Federationists know, these agencies helped trigger a federal investigation of me in 1978. The Federal Attorney in Des Moines, Iowa, was induced to audit the books of the Federation, the Iowa Commission for the Blind, and every other organization with which I had any connection. Then, newspaper articles were stimulated, containing all kinds of innuendo and hinting that I would soon be languishing in one or another of the federal penitentiaries around the country. Every time we tried to introduce progressive legislation or sought to reform one of the agencies, the personal attacks and innu-

does were trotted out.

As you will read in the August *Monitor*, all of this so-called "investigating" has now backfired. I have here a letter which I want to read to you. It makes it perfectly clear that after a thorough investigation not one single violation was found. I wonder whether our opponents will be as anxious to spread the word about the outcome of the investigation as they were about its beginning. The letter speaks for itself. Here it is:

Post Office Box 548
Omaha, Nebraska 68101
February 2, 1981

Ms. Roxanne Barton Conlin
United States Attorney
Des Moines, Iowa

Re: Kenneth Jernigan
Iowa Commission for the Blind

Dear Ms. Conlin:

This will confirm a conversation between Special Agent (SA) (——) and you on January 31, 1981. At that time you advised that the Audit Agency of the Department of Health and Human Services had completed their audit of the Iowa Commission for the Blind and related private agencies. [That means us and everything else I'm connected with.] You further advised that after reviewing the complete audit you determined that no Federal violations were uncovered and, accordingly, you were closing your case.

Based on your opinion, this office is conducting no further investigation and is considering this matter closed.

Very truly yours,
Harlan C. Phillips
Special Agent in Charge

What a year it has been! It has been filled with challenge and triumph. It has also required us to make heavy expenditures.

If we are to continue our momentum, we must make the commitment and find the means of financing our movement. During 1981 we spent over a hundred thousand dollars more than we took in. This is understandable, but we must do what we can to reverse the trend. Later in the convention you will hear a full financial report. In the meantime let me say this: Our movement is worth whatever it costs. It is worth commitment and dedication. It is worth not only our money but also our time and our best effort.

We have come a long way together in this organization. It has been the vehicle for helping us become strong and free. It has provided us with hope and allowed us to dream. I have said to you before (and I say it again): There is a bond and a mutual commitment between the President and the

members of this organization. You expect your President to stand forth on the cutting edge of progress and do whatever has to be done to lead the movement. You expect that I will not shrink from unpleasant tasks or falter in the battle. I have said to you before (and I now repeat it): As long as I am President of this organization, I intend to lead it—as firmly, as fairly, and as wisely as I know how—but I intend to lead. That is the duty which I owe to each of you.

In turn, you have a duty to me, and to the movement. If I am to stand in the front line of the battle and take whatever comes in the way of personal abuse and attack, I need (indeed, I must have) your support, your encouragement, and (yes) your love and understanding. Together we have built a mighty movement, and together we shall go on to full first-class citizenship for all of the blind. This is our mutual bond of commitment. This is the National Federation of the Blind.

NEW CHARTERS SYMBOLIZE NATIONAL UNITY

At the meeting of the Board of Directors at the NFB convention Monday morning, July 5, 1982, an important discussion and series of actions occurred. As usual, the Board Meeting was attended by more than a thousand members and delegates.

A resolution was presented to formalize and make unmistakably clear the question as to where the ultimate sovereignty lies in the Federation.

Most Federationists had thought that this matter had long since been settled. The power of the National Board to reorganize state affiliates has been repeatedly con-

firmed by the convention. The D.C. reorganization was confirmed by the 1975 convention; the New Jersey reorganization by the 1976 convention; and the Pennsylvania reorganization by the 1977 convention. Other affiliate reorganizations have taken place through the years and have been accepted as a matter of course, creating no stir and never coming to the convention at all. In 1977 in New Orleans the National Constitution was amended to deal specifically with the powers of the Board concerning reorganization and other matters. The discussion which took place

on the floor at the time of the passage of this amendment made clear the intent, and there was virtual unanimity as to the desirability and necessity of the policy.

Nevertheless, Bob Acosta (the former president of our one-time California affiliate) has been fighting the Federation in court for the past four years, declaring that the National Board had no right to expel him, no right to expel the affiliate, and no right to make any decisions of a binding nature affecting the affiliate. He also contends that the national convention had no right to expel him and cannot make binding decisions concerning an affiliate. Such a doctrine (if allowed to stand) would mean the total destruction of our movement. It would mean that the national body of the Federation would be totally powerless to take meaningful action.

The case of Mr. Acosta provides vivid proof. Early in 1978 he put his wife on the payroll of the California affiliate. He did this despite the fact that he (as President) had the sole power to hire and fire, that he had not consulted with the state Board or informed it of his intention, and that the action amounted to paying himself a salary. Attorneys informed the national President that this action by Mr. Acosta jeopardized the exempt tax status of the California affiliate and that it might also be illegal. In any case the secrecy in which it was done and the method of its handling were politically inept and were calculated to create dissension and problems.

The same characteristic of secrecy and concealment was evident in Mr. Acosta's handling of a bequest to the San Francisco Chapter, which came to light in the spring of 1978. Mr. Acosta worked with the San Francisco President to put the bequest into the state treasury and to keep it a secret from the San Francisco membership. The state treasurer later admitted that he was instructed by Mr. Acosta not to tell the

delegates and members at the state convention of the existence of the bequest.

There were also other actions which made it clear that Mr. Acosta was rapidly ceasing to be viable as a state president. He wrote abusive letters to Mrs. tenBroek, the widow of the founder of our movement; he displayed increasing arrogance in dealing with the members; and he alienated almost all of the state Board.

In June of 1978 he announced that he was resigning as president and then said on the following day that he had changed his mind. When the state Board tried to call a meeting to consider the matter (a right which it was guaranteed by the Constitution). Mr. Acosta aborted the effort by calling a Board meeting of his own the day before the meeting scheduled by the Board and packing the room with a group of his supporters, who made it impossible for the Board to meet in an atmosphere where reason and deliberation could occur.

Then, Mr. Acosta and others of his supporters went up and down the state invading local chapters, shouting down the members, and insisting on their right to join chapter after chapter as voting members to determine the elections and select the delegates to the state convention. It also came out that anonymous letters attacking the national administration had been sent into the state from Washington, D.C. It was determined by an expert (and not denied by Mr. Acosta when he was confronted with the evidence) that the envelopes had been addressed on the typewriter in our own Los Angeles office, an office under the control of Mr. Acosta. The problem was not so much the attacks as the underhandedness and secrecy of it all.

In this atmosphere the California Board met late in August of 1978 and declared Mr. Acosta no longer to be president. The California Board then asked the National Board to confirm its actions and to come

to California to hold a hearing and try to bring order out of chaos. The National Board met in Los Angeles September 16, 1978. The fifteen-hour meeting was a disgraceful performance. Mr. Acosta, his lawyer, and some of his supporters yelled, screamed, and tried to shout down the national President and Board members. Their actions bordered on mob violence and riot. They ultimately yelled and screamed their way out of the room.

The National Board then voted to expel Mr. Acosta from membership in the Federation, along with those who continued to recognize him as state president in California. Mr. Acosta continued to hold himself out as president of the California affiliate. His lawyer engaged in some of the most unethical conduct imaginable. Among other things, he said in writing that the national leadership of the Federation were "fascists," a provable falsehood.

Late in October of 1978 the National Board expelled the California affiliate and made plans for a state reorganization. In the circumstances the National Board might well have been criticized for excessive leniency and for failing to act sooner.

In 1979 at the Miami convention (after notice to Mr. Acosta) a full hearing was held on the convention floor. The convention confirmed the action of the Board in expelling Mr. Acosta and the California affiliate. In a totally separate action (and in full compliance with the provisions of the Constitution) the convention expelled the California affiliate again. This was completely separate from the earlier actions of the Board and the confirmation of those actions by the convention. At the 1979 convention the national Constitution was amended to spell out even more explicitly the powers of the Board and the convention regarding expulsion and reorganization. After proper notice Mr.

Acosta and the group he headed were yet again expelled, this time under the new provisions of the Constitution. Thus, Mr. Acosta and his group were expelled by the National Board; the convention confirmed the expulsion; the convention initiated and carried out a totally separate action for expulsion; and (under the new provisions of the Constitution) the convention initiated and carried out still another separate action for expulsion.

Nevertheless, Mr. Acosta was unwilling to accept the decisions of the convention and has continued to fight in the courts. Even though he supported the bosses of the Minneapolis Society for the Blind in the battle for proxy votes in 1979 and has otherwise continued to violate Federation policy, he still tries to claim (ridiculous as it may sound) that he is a loyal, staunch Federationist.

At the Acosta California convention in the fall of 1981, Mr. Acosta admitted that his group was not paying the costs of their lawsuit. They had "outside sources." In addition to paying the expenses of anyone of the Acosta group who might be traveling or otherwise involved in their court action, the Acosta group voted to pay an extra \$150 per day to any of their group traveling or working on the case. They made it clear that they had (for purposes of the lawsuit) what amounted to almost unlimited funding. And where in the country might such funding come from? From the custodial agencies who have tried so unsuccessfully to stop the Federation from probing into their operations and exposing their behavior? There were those who said that the purpose was to ruin the Federation by bankrupting it in legal actions. Finance any dissident member or former member or former affiliate in court actions and so occupy the Federation so that it would not have time to expose the shenanigans of the agencies.

The Federation is a people's movement. We are not bankrolled by the agencies. We pay our own costs, including the costs of lawsuits. We cannot hope to match the agencies dollar for dollar in legal fees. We must make up the difference in commitment, determination, and ingenuity. The present California lawsuit has cost hundreds of thousands of dollars, and we must find a way to prevent future lawsuits of this type—or if we cannot prevent them, we must find a way to see that they are quickly finished and not profitable to our opponents.

In this atmosphere and with this public in mind the National Board met in Minneapolis Monday morning, July 5, 1982. The

spirit was not one of depression. Far from it. As the discussion progressed and the plan of counterattack unfolded, the mood was one of determination and exhilaration. We have fought many battles and met many challenges, and we have always emerged stronger and more united than when we began. In fact, there are those who think that the groups and individuals who are financing the Acosta lawsuit may have made a terrible (perhaps even a fatal) mistake.

Be that as it may, the National Board decided to recommend a resolution to the convention for action. Resolution 82-101 was read as follows:

Whereas, the National Federation of the Blind is not a confederacy of separate, independent state and local organizations but a single nationwide movement, and

Whereas, the Constitution and policy decisions of the National Federation of the Blind have repeatedly emphasized this fact;

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the National Federation of the Blind in convention assembled in Minneapolis, Minnesota, this 6th day of July, 1982, that all state affiliates of the Federation shall receive Charters of Affiliation and that those Charters shall be signed on the reverse side by an officer of the state affiliate and by the President of the National Federation of the Blind. If the language of the Articles of Incorporation or of any other governing document of the affiliate is inconsistent with the provisions of the Charter, said Articles or other governing document or documents shall be amended to conform to the provisions of the Charter. In affirmation of the spirit that we are an indivisible national movement, each affiliate shall (either by action of its Board of Directors or its state convention) ratify the provisions of the Charter and send notice of such ratification to the National Office of the Federation. Duplicate original Charters shall be signed for each state, one copy to be retained in the National Office of the Federation and one copy to be issued to the state affiliate. No organization shall become a state affiliate and no organization shall remain a state affiliate of the National Federation of the Blind, until and unless it has received and executed in duplicate a Charter of Affiliation, said Charter to contain on the reverse side the following language:

Whereas, the _____ desires to be an affiliate of the National Federation of the Blind;
and

Whereas, the National Federation of the Blind desires to have the _____ as an affiliate;

Now, therefore, for these and other valuable considerations, the parties agree and covenant as follows:

WITNESSETH:

1) The _____ shall be entitled to use the name National Federation of the Blind, Federation of the Blind, or any variant thereof so long as it continues to be an affiliate of the National Federation of the Blind.

2) The _____ is a subordinate corporation to the National Federation of the Blind.

3) The _____ will be subject to the provisions of the Constitution of the National Federation of the Blind and the policy decisions of the National Federation of the Blind.

4) The _____ and its members shall (in common with all other affiliates and members) enjoy all of the rights and privileges of affiliate status and membership in the National Federation of the Blind.

5) This contract may not be altered, abridged, or revoked in violation of the provisions of the Constitution of the National Federation of the Blind.

6) No amendment to the Constitution or Articles of Incorporation of the _____ shall become effective until ten days after such amendment has been sent by certified mail to the National Office of the Federation for purposes of review and consultation.

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND

by:

by:

The comments of the Board members and the tumultuous reaction of the audience made it clear that the Federation (from the newest rank and file member to the most seasoned veteran) wanted the new chartering procedure adopted. There was a positive upsurge of what can only be called joy throughout the entire room—a feeling that this was a way of giving each individual Federationist a way of affirmatively expressing his or her participation in a public declaration of faith in the Federation—of the kind of movement we want, of the kind of movement we are, and of the kind of movement we intend to be. It was a feeling that permeated every local chapter and every state affiliate. President Jernigan said:

"I believe this will solve a good deal of our problems. Any affiliate that can't conscientiously sign this ought to question whether or not they've been living the truth or a falsehood, because (applause) we amended the Constitution in '77 and in '79, and our policies before that had been clear. They were that we intend to exercise our sovereignty as a national movement, that the state affiliate is not the sovereign entity in this organization. It has rights, yes. Eight members of this current Board are state presidents, and most of the rest are past state presidents. This Board has, if anything, been too easygoing in dealing with organizational problems. There is no chance that it is going to abuse the rights of a state affiliate. . . . what I would propose is this: I would propose that each state here sign the duplicate charter; that I take one of those back and that the state affiliate take one back; and that I charter the affiliates on Thursday night at the banquet—all of them—and that the state affiliate go home and ratify this charter.

"Now, if any state organization (after careful consideration) doesn't want to be a part of this Federation under those condi-

tions, let them not be angry about it, and let us not be angry. Let them go their way in peace. Let us go and organize an affiliate in this state—not try to reorganize that particular affiliate but organize a state affiliate of our own. Let those who were in the former affiliate who want to come and join our affiliate do so, and those who do not go their way in peace. And let us govern our own organization in our own way, as we see fit to govern it. (applause)

"Let it also be fully understood if I am re-elected President and if this resolution passes, the next time we run into a California situation we will invoke the contract provisions, and I believe that no state then will stand any chance if we have played fair and can demonstrate what we've done is in accordance with the contract. But what we must do, as I see it, is to get past the place where the agencies can divert attention from their shortcomings by picking up our dissident members and financing them to fight us internally. We've got to stop that. (applause)

"I go back to a basic. Ultimately no court in the land will, or in my opinion can, deprive us of the right of freedom of assembly and of having an organization that operates within the law and operates as we, the blind of this country, want it to operate.

"I now want to introduce the First Vice President. I want to say something about Don Capps before I introduce him. Don doesn't make a lot of fuss or to-do about his role in the organization. But let me tell you that over the years (in good times and bad, when we have had tough decisions to make) I have drawn great strength from the fact that Don Capps has always staunchly and resolutely been willing to stand up for what had to be done and helped lead the way in doing it. Don has expressed a wish to speak on this matter . . . Our friend Larry Eisenberg (the Acosta lawyer),

among other things, tries to say to his judges when he plays his parlor games in court that nobody ever speaks in this organization except its president. Well, let's see what the record says. Here's the First Vice President":

First Vice President Don Capps then spoke as follows:

"All of us, I'm sure, listened very carefully to the words of our President. And while we continue to be disturbed over the situation in California, let me assure you (audience response) that loyalty runs deep where I come from and that we will continue to stand tall and stand together until we find the solution. We will find a solution, and we will prevail in this matter. (applause)

"Yesterday was July 4th. We observed the 206th birthday of our nation, and we observed the independence of our country. As we pledged the allegiance to the flag of this country, there are some very important words in the pledge. I think the cardinal words in the pledge, perhaps, are these: 'One nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.' And so it is as a Federation—we too! We, too, represent one organization, one movement, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all. (applause)

"The things that our President has talked about this morning are so basic and so clear and so essential to the things that we've been doing for a quarter of a century that I find it difficult for any of us to have any hesitation whatsoever to sign this charter to support the resolution. We must stand together. We must be united in our resources, our time, and our commitment for the high principles and ideals which we espouse. The price we pay for disunity is simply too high, and we cannot afford it.

"The things that our President discussed this morning are things that we've been doing in my home state of South Carolina

for more than twenty-five years (since we've been an affiliate of this great national organization), and they are things that have improved the quality of life for the blind of South Carolina. They are the kind of things which have improved the quality of life for the blind in your states, too.

"Plus, Mr. President, I'd like, as a tangible expression of my respect and support for this charter, (and, perhaps, it's only ceremonial in that it simply incorporates the things that our Constitution has already encompassed) to publicly be the first person in my capacity as First Vice President of the National Federation of the Blind and as President of the National Federation of the Blind of South Carolina to sign this charter, which we will proudly do." (cheers and applause)

PRESIDENT JERNIGAN: "You realize all of you (and the First Vice President, I know, realizes—and we're saying it in the presence of a thousand plus people so that there can never be any question when our opponents go to court and say, 'But they really didn't understand it') this is a binding, legal contract. It is a contract that will bind the NFB of South Carolina and bind the national organization, and that is true of any other state that signs it.

"We will not require any state to sign it until or unless this resolution is passed, and at that time it will be required. If it's passed, then any state that has not followed through by ratifying and sending back notice of ratification will simply not continue to be an affiliate of this organization. That's the way it is." (applause)

After this statement by President Jernigan, the following comments occurred:

PRESIDENT JERNIGAN: "Don Capps (acting in his capacity as National Federation of the Blind of South Carolina President) has now signed in duplicate the charter. Therefore, a binding contract

exists. (applause) There are other state presidents on this Board, and I think it is well to hear from them."

DICK EDLUND: "Mr. President?"

PRESIDENT JERNIGAN: "Dick Edlund is President of the National Federation of the Blind of Kansas. Do you wish to speak in that capacity?"

DICK EDLUND: "I do, sir, and as First Vice President Don Capps has said, I understand it thoroughly, we've discussed it extensively, it's a thing that absolutely needs to be done, and makes absolute good sense. And there's another part of what Don said (not dealing necessarily with the pledge of allegiance but, more or less, the Preamble of the Constitution), and it said, 'We the people.' And I believe that's who we speak for today, the people, the blind people of this nation, and I would like to be the next to sign our charter." (cheers and applause)

PRESIDENT JERNIGAN: "Peggy Pinder of Iowa. Do you speak in your capacity as President of the NFB of Iowa?"

PEGGY PINDER: "Yes sir, I do. As you know, Mr. President, we in Iowa have dealt directly with the issues that are concerned with the resolution that you have just read. We in Iowa, over the last year, had internal organizational problems, and we have lived through, in an intense way in the last year, the issues that this resolution once and for all will finally settle.

"In the first place, we all know that forty-two years of practice is reflected and distilled in the resolution and the charter that you've just read, Mr. President. We've all lived that way for forty-two years. It is certainly a pleasure for me to be able as the President of the National Federation of the Blind of Iowa to ask that I be able, also, to sign the charter in Iowa's behalf.

"But there's something that I think that the charter does that we've never quite been able to do before, and that's to gather

together that practice that we've all known and lived and write it down, and write it down not only for all of *our* benefits, so each of us today and henceforth knows what the terms are. But to write it down so that judges and lawyers can understand it. And that's what the back of the charter does. (cheers and applause) And I speak to you this morning as an attorney and say that I'm glad that we put it into language that they can comprehend."

PRESIDENT JERNIGAN: "I want to ask you a question. In your opinion, as an attorney, will this contract hold up in court?"

PEGGY PINDER: "The contract will hold up in court. It is undertaken on both sides with knowledge and voluntarily. Both the national organization and the state affiliate know what we're doing, and do it voluntarily. And, therefore, yes, Mr. President, it will hold up in court. But it does one more thing than that. It shows for each and every one of us that's a member of this organization that we're proud to be a part of the organization that we have made. (applause) May I sign the charter for Iowa?"

PRESIDENT JERNIGAN: "Okay, give her a charter—and Iowa will be the third state to sign. (applause)

"Diane McGeorge of Colorado. Do you speak in your capacity as President of the NFB of Colorado?"

DIANE MC GEORGE: "Yes sir, I do. And I also speak with a great deal of pride in being a member of this organization. It is with a great deal of pride that I, too, wish to sign the charter, immediately. The NFB of Colorado has been an affiliate of the National Federation of the Blind since 1955. We have never viewed ourselves in any other way than as a subordinate corporation, a subordinate affiliate of the NFB; and I think that now that we have the opportunity to sign this charter (this

contract if you will), once again it reaffirms the fact that we are an integral part [of the Federation]. We all wish to share in the glories and the accomplishments of our movement. It's easy to go out of here and say, 'Oh yes, we're a member of the largest organization of blind people.' And it's easy for people to come to us and say, 'I have this problem. Will you fight for us?' And we say, 'Yes, we will.' Now, I believe we have a visible means by which we may affirm our commitment, and we may say, 'Yes, we are proud to be members of the NFB, and we support our organization wholeheartedly, and certainly view this as an honor.'"

PRESIDENT JERNIGAN: "Okay, let history record that in the forty-second year of the Federation, Colorado was the fourth to sign the charter." (audience reaction)

BOB ESCHBACH: "Ohio, Bob Eschbach. I really would say that if the charter were available without the resolution, it ought to be signed anyway. I think it's an excellent example of what we have been and what we continue to be. Diane talked about the sharing of the glory and the accomplishments of our organization. I think it's a privilege, also, to share in the struggles and the efforts we make in order to get where all blind people ought to be. The seventies have been a tremendous example of how we have not only accomplished that, we've accomplished it against some tremendous odds, and what we face in California and elsewhere from those who would oppose us will simply evaporate in time. We will succeed, and this charter is a way to insure that. I'm prepared to sign this, sir."

PRESIDENT JERNIGAN: "Bob Eschbach said something to a number of us earlier this week. I said, 'We've got to find a way not to fight on the agency's terms by letting them launder money through and finance lawsuits against us by our own

dissidents. That's not where we ought to be fighting.' And Bob Eschbach said, 'Well, if my PAC money has to go to fight there and that's where the battle is, then so be it. We'll fight there if we have to.'" (applause)

JOYCE SCANLAN: "Mr. President, as President of the National Federation of the Blind of Minnesota, I'd be very proud to sign the charter. (applause) I think anyone who's been in the Federation for very long knows that Minnesota has had a long and troubled history in the movement. I think that we've been very, very proud during the past years to resolve a number of issues that can bring us to the point where we can very easily sign such a charter, and are proud to be a part of this great movement. I'd be pleased to sign." (applause)

PRESIDENT JERNIGAN: "Let it be known that Minnesota was the sixth to sign the charter, and also, in furtherance of Bob Eschbach's statement, remember that this resolution has not yet been adopted. Therefore, the states that are now signing it are signing without any resolution requiring that they sign."

NORMAN GARDNER: "Mr. President, I speak in my capacity as President of the National Federation of the Blind of Idaho. I am anxious to sign this charter because I believe it embodies simply the practice, as I have understood it and have felt it, since I have become a part of the National Federation of the Blind. It's amazing to me that we have to speak so clearly to lawyers and judges. Be that as it may, I'm anxious to speak so now to let it be known that the only way we have had any success or will have any success is as a single, strong, united movement with a strong national, sovereign body. I believe that that is the only way we have had any success and the only way that we will continue to have any success in the future. I'm anxious to sign." (applause)

ALLEN HARRIS: "Al Harris."

PRESIDENT JERNIGAN: "Al Harris of Michigan."

ALLEN HARRIS: "It is said that freedom is born of courage, and we in this organization have never lacked courage in the need to maintain our freedom and independence. It is clearly necessary, proper, and timely to sign this document—to declare our independence from the tyranny of those who would hurt us. As the President of the National Federation of the Blind of Michigan, I would be pleased to sign with dispatch." (applause)

PRESIDENT JERNIGAN: "Let it be remembered that Michigan was the eighth state to sign the charter, and may you sign it large enough that Mr. Eisenberg can read it without his spectacles. (crowd reaction and applause) . . . California has requested that it also be permitted, publicly to sign the charter. Sharon Gold?" (cheers and applause)

SHARON GOLD: "Yes, sir. It is a great pleasure to sign this charter as the rightful California affiliate, and right and proper affiliate of this great organization. (applause) We in California are tired of another group claiming to being an affiliate of this organization." (applause)

PRESIDENT JERNIGAN: "Nevada (Audrey Tait, President) wishes to sign the charter. That's ten."

RALPH SANDERS: "...The issue of whether an affiliate is subordinate or not is really in a sense an immaterial issue, because the affiliates are simply a part of the national movement. We really are just one movement, and I think this resolution is the final affirmation of the fact that we are Federationists."

At this stage there was such a clamor from the audience of state presidents wishing to be next to sign the charter that there was a line of people waiting. In rapid order the following states signed the charter: Utah, New York, Wisconsin, Oregon, Dis-

trict of Columbia, Illinois, New Jersey, Texas, Nebraska, and Tennessee. Sterling France of New York next asked for the floor and said:

STERLING FRANCE: "I think the record ought to show (so that it would be clear again) that not only the President speaks for this organization but in addition, that members themselves do speak as individuals, and they respond to what is right. Folks were literally knocking each other down to get up here and sign the charters, and I think it ought to be noted on the record." (cheers and applause)

PRESIDENT JERNIGAN: "Our opponents wouldn't understand. (audience response) Okay, we've got a line of people who want to sign, and we'll do it as rapidly as we can."

"... Judy Hansen is here. Florida wishes to sign. (cheers and applause) And Maryland is here to sign, says Willie J. Thompson, chief executive and boss dog of the Maryland affiliate. (crowd reaction) What do you think that our opponents will do with that? (audience response) Yes, they'll bark about it. Remember that all of this is being done without any compulsory resolution at all. Willie Thompson says, 'Who needs a resolution to do what is right.' (cheers and applause) Alfred Blake is the First Vice President of Louisiana and wishes to sign this charter. Remember that the charter must still be ratified back home by the Board or by the convention. Melba Barlow, President of Mississippi, is here to sign."

"There isn't much question about whether this resolution is going to pass, I think. We may not even need to bring it up, but I suppose we will as a formality."

"Gary Mackenstadt of the state of Washington (and some of you might think about this) says that he has enough of the NFB of Washington Board here and that he intends to get the Board together to ratify

the charter this week. What exciting days we have at conventions!" (audience response)

A brief recess was called so that other states could sign the charter. Utah announced that its Board had met and ratified the document, thus becoming the first. Washington, Michigan, and other states also ratified. The spirit was almost one of celebration. It set the tone for the entire week.

As is the custom in the Federation, the resolution was not voted on by the convention until the following day. Late Tuesday morning, July 6, Resolution 82-101 was brought to the floor for action. By that time, 50 states (all except Hawaii) had signed the charter, and many of them had already ratified it by Board action. Before the vote was taken, Warren Toyama (President of the Hawaii affiliate) asked for the floor, and the following exchange took place:

WARREN TOYAMA: "Mr. President."

PRESIDENT JERNIGAN: "Please give Warren your respectful attention."

WARREN TOYAMA: "This is just a question to clarify the resolution. The question that we have in Hawaii is that of the assets of the organization. In the resolution (well, let's say in the case of Hawaii) we have a constitution which provides that in the case of liquidation of the organization, the total assets will revert to the national body or the national treasury. Now, in this resolution, does the question of the assets of the organization in Hawaii (or any other state, for that matter) change? In other words, assuming that we wanted to budget our own funds in a certain manner, would we need clearance from the National Office in order to do it? Are we, in essence, pooling our total national, you know, of fifty-one affiliates' treasury into the pool and splitting up?"

PRESIDENT JERNIGAN: "No. Let me

deal with what my understanding of this resolution is. I think it is fairly clear. I believe this resolution establishes no new policy except that it formalizes existing policy by charter. Warren, specifically, let me deal with the question of what happens if Hawaii chooses not to ratify this charter. If you choose not to ratify this charter, nobody is going to come and try to grab your assets. Nobody's going to try to reorganize the Hawaii Federation. You will have to give up the name 'Federation' or you will have to face us in court. If, however, you do that, we would then organize a National Federation of the Blind of Hawaii. We would, in no way, attempt to touch the assets of the current Hawaii organization. That would be that. Now, let's suppose that you ratify this charter (or, for that matter, let's suppose that we hadn't ever brought the matter up). If you were to behave as California had behaved, and if, in other words, there was a dispute as to election; if there was a dispute as to actually whether the organization in the state had taken a given action, or whether that action was valid, the National Constitution provides, and has provided for a number of years, that the national body then may be the arbiter in that business, may make the decision. In that case, the national body would have the same right to reorganize the state affiliate that it now has. The charter has nothing to do with that and, as for instance in California, nobody sought to bring the California assets into the national treasury, despite the absolutely false statements to the contrary made by some of the former California affiliate people and their attorney. What we did seek to do, since more than two-thirds of the Board of the California affiliate voted as they did and since the national organization voted to reorganize the affiliate, was to have the assets of the California affiliate (money

raised in the name of the Federation) go to the reorganized affiliate. There is nothing concerning assets in this resolution. We won't be filling out joint financial statements or anything like that. The affiliate will still fill out its own, and its tax returns and the rest of it. Does that answer your question?"

WARREN TOYAMA: "Yes, that clarifies one major question. Thank you."

PRESIDENT JERNIGAN: "Do you wish to speak on the matter?"

WARREN TOYAMA: "No, I don't. This was the major question in the delegation, so I wanted to clarify this."

PRESIDENT JERNIGAN: "All right. I hope that this is clear with everybody."

Lev Williams (President of the Tennessee affiliate) asked whether local chapters should ratify the charter. President Jernigan said that this would be a matter for state determination. He said that, if the local chapter was incorporated, he would strongly advise that the state affiliate

consider setting up a similar charter arrangement with the local chapters. Of course, the National Constitution already requires local chapters to be bound by the provisions of the National Constitution and by national policies.

A roll call vote was then taken on Resolution 82-101, and all fifty-one states voted yes. When it came Hawaii's turn to vote, President Toyama said: "Hawaii votes yes, and we'll sign it before we leave."

President Jernigan replied: "Hawaii, we are all very, very much pleased with that." (cheers and applause)

At the conclusion of the roll call, President Jernigan said: "Let the whole world know what kind of an organization we intend to be. (cheers and applause) I want to point out to you that on this very vital policy resolution we have, on roll call vote, fifty-one states voting yes and not a single no. This is the blind people of this country speaking." (cheers and applause)

NFB DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD TO SENATOR HOWARD METZENBAUM

Senator Howard Metzenbaum addressed the 1982 NFB convention Tuesday afternoon. Before he spoke, President Jernigan made the following presentation:

"Over the years our movement has been fortunate in the many friends we have found in government, the Congress, and in other positions of importance to the lives of the blind. These relationships are a vital part of our march toward full equality and illustrate, as well as anything can, our strength as a grassroots people's movement.

"From time to time, there are those in positions of influence in our country who stand out and deserve special recognition by the blind for meritorious service on our behalf. We are not accustomed, however, to handing out tributes lightly. These are memorable events of special significance in the unfolding history of the organized blind.

"This afternoon is such an occasion. We have with us Senator Howard Metzenbaum of Ohio. He spoke to us last year during our rally on the Capitol steps. Since that time, Senator Metzenbaum has worked

closely with us—as closely as anyone. Together, Senator Metzenbaum and this organization have achieved tangible results. He sponsored our amendment to include the blind in the Voting Rights Bill which was just passed. The Voting Rights Amendment is an historic step forward for the blind of this country. It will bring about constructive change in voter assistance procedures in several states. But also, this achievement marks the first time in the history of civil rights legislation in our country that the rights of the blind have been joined with the rights of other minority groups within a single statute. This itself will help to send a message. The blind are a minority, and we can win our civil rights.

“Senator Metzenbaum is a principal ally in this struggle. Last year, at the Ohio state convention, he pledged to help us with voting rights. He kept his word to the letter. He sponsored the Senate amendment. Now it is part of the federal law.

“Senator Metzenbaum is our friend. But more than that, he has come increasingly to understand and to be of real assistance in our quest for freedom and first-class status. It is for this reason, and to pay tribute to the significant role which he is now playing in helping us achieve actual progress toward full equality, that we recognize Senator Metzenbaum today for his distinguished service to the blind of the United States. We extend such recognition selectively—only when there is an individual or an organization that has earned it. Senator Metzenbaum has met the test. The plaque which I am about to present to him is a tangible expression of this. It is our way of saying thank you. But even more, Senator, we are genuinely proud to have you as a partner on the barricades. The plaque reads: *‘In appreciation of his exercise of leadership on behalf of the blind of the United States, the National Federation of*

the Blind bestows this recognition of distinguished service upon the Honorable Howard Metzenbaum—our colleague and our friend in the battle. He shares our hopes and joins us in making our dreams come true.’”

“Senator Metzenbaum, welcome to the National Federation of the Blind Convention.”

Senator Metzenbaum responded as follows:

“Accepting this plaque from you has a special personal significance. Although I did not have in close proximity to me anyone who was blind, it is a fact that my mother always told me of her mother who was blind. I can only say that I am sorry today that my mother doesn’t live that she might experience and share with me the thrill of being awarded this plaque from all of you.

“I think you might find it of interest to know how we came to sponsor the amendment to the Voting Rights Act and how it became the law. When I was speaking at the Ohio state convention of your organization last year, Jim Gashel said we ought to have an amendment in the Voting Rights Act that protects the rights of the blind to choose somebody on their own to help them with respect to voting. I said that makes sense to me. Little did I know of the battles we would have before that became the law of the land. I can tell you that last week when the President signed the Voting Rights Act, we took a tremendous leap forward in providing to blind and disabled citizens the respect they are due. As of now, a blind person who is unable to vote without assistance may bring someone of his or her choice into the voting booth. Realistically speaking, it is a shame that it has taken the nation so long to act on this basic right. In the past without assurances

that their privacy would be respected or their rights to chose protected, citizens were effectively being denied their right to vote. Who among us wants somebody looking over our shoulder, a stranger, to violate the sanctity of our right to vote? Some blind individuals, therefore, have chosen not to vote, rather than suffer the demeaning and intimidating requirement that they take assistance from someone other than a person of their own choice. That's not assistance. That's not the secret ballot. That's not how we encourage citizens to participate in our electoral system. All that did was shut people out. I was proud to be able to play a role in providing an affirmative right to the blind and disabled to have the assistance of someone of their own choice in the voting booth. Believe it or not, we actually had to fight for this amendment. It seemed so illogical. Why should anybody deny the blind the right to have somebody with them in the voting booth by their own choice. In the Judiciary Committee of the Senate, we had to beat back the amendment that would have deleted from the compromise bill the voting rights provision for the blind that had been agreed upon by the major sponsors. I was shocked that anyone could have questioned such a basic right. I was one of the advocates of the Voting Rights Act, a loud and forceful and (hopefully) effective one, and I found that some who were for the Voting Rights Act were concerned that somehow we might jeopardize its enactment if we put in the amendment that is *your* amendment. I responded that my opinion is that it makes the bill that much stronger. It doesn't weaken it. There are

members in the Senate and in the Congress who will be proud to stand up and say, 'I helped make it possible for the blind of America to vote.' We got the bill out of committee. We beat back the attempt to amend it. Then we went to the Senate floor. Again, we were threatened with an amendment to delete the assistance provisions. But with the help of your organization, with the help of your president, with the help of Jim Gashel, and with the help of all of you—we convinced our opponents that the battle should not be lost, and the Voting Rights Bill was enacted with the amendment as originally drafted.

"At the time of the debate, we said to them the blind don't need to be protected; the blind don't want to be coddled. You have the right to be treated with the same respect as any other citizen."

Senator Metzenbaum moved from these specific comments about the voting rights provisions for the blind to a general review of his feelings concerning the present status of the country and the actions which the nation should take. Resolution 82-08 commending Senator Metzenbaum for his work on the Voting Rights Act was read and passed by the convention. Senator Metzenbaum came back to the microphone and said:

"Friends, I came today to make a speech because I wanted to share my thoughts and concerns with you. You overwhelm me with a plaque and with a resolution. I am very, very grateful to you, and I'm very, very honored to share this afternoon with you. Thank you from the depths of my heart."

CONVENTION BANQUET

As always, the banquet Thursday night, July 8, was the highpoint of the NFB convention. The Hall of States at the Leamington Hotel was crowded to overflowing with enthusiastic Federationists from every state in the nation and from several foreign countries. Marc Maurer, the Master of Ceremonies, ably chaired the meeting and coordinated the evening's activities. The occasion was both festive and serious.

The invocation was given by the Reverend Robert Eschbach, President of the NFB of Ohio and member of the National Board. After dinner, introductions were made, and Joyce Scanlan (President of the host affiliate) gave greetings.

Then, President Jernigan presented charters to the affiliates. He said: "All fifty-one states have officially signed the charters—all of them. These charters symbolize (not only to us and not only to others in this field, but they also symbolize to the world) that we are the kind of movement we are, one and indivisible. I'm going to call the roll and ask that the charters be given. A duplicate original of this charter will hang in the National Office."

Next, Reverend Howard May (Chairman of the Scholarship Committee, President of the NFB of Connecticut, and newly elected member of the National Board) presented scholarships. Susie Bridges of South Carolina and Peg Halverson of the District of Columbia each received a Hermione Grant Calhoun Scholarship in the amount of \$2,500. Richard Culley of Indiana received the \$1,200 Howard Brown Rickard Scholarship, and Fred Schroeder of New Mexico received our newest award,

the \$1,200 Melva T. Owen Memorial Scholarship.

The next item on the program was the banquet address by President Jernigan. This was followed by three special presentations: Rami Rabby (Secretary of the NFB) presented a Distinguished Service Award to the International Telephone and Telegraph Corporation. James Nixon (a Vice President of IT&T) was on hand to receive the award. Then, First Vice President Donald Capps presented the Newel Perry Award to Congressman Barry Goldwater, Jr., of California. Congressman Goldwater responded by pledging continuing support of our movement and of the effort to reform the sheltered shops.

Jim Omvig presented the Jacobus tenBroek Award to Ray and Diane McGeorge, two of the most loved and respected members of the movement. In response Diane said: "Dr. Jernigan and all of my very dearest and close friends: I thank you all. Words are just not sufficient. If it was not for the National Federation of the Blind, we could not have come miles. We could not have made the strides that we have made. I'm deeply touched. Believe me when I tell you that this is, without a doubt, the very proudest day of my life."

Ray said: "Thank you friends. I don't think I've ever been so surprised in my life. Anything that I've done in the Federation has been because I've had the privilege of knowing some mighty fine people—and people that have been denied opportunities. I guess that's why we've been in the Federation for a long time. I am extremely proud to have had the privilege of knowing Dr. tenBroek, as well as Dr. Jernigan. This

night is important to me, as was the night in June of 1955 when I attended my first NFB meeting—presided over by Dr. Jacobus tenBroek and put together by Dr. Kenneth Jernigan.”

As the evening drew to a close, some of the honored guests at the head table made concluding remarks. Virginia Knauer, Special Assistant to President Reagan, said: “Thank you for letting me share this very wonderful evening with you. God bless you

all, and God bless your great President.”

Robert D’Agostino (Deputy Assistant Attorney General, Civil Rights Division, United States Department of Justice) said: “Thank you so much for having me. Your commitment, your spirit, your dedication. I feel like a Federationist. Thank you.”

It was a fitting way to conclude one of the most moving and enthusiastic banquets the organization has ever experienced. It was, indeed, the highpoint of the convention.

SPECIAL SERVICE AWARD TO IT & T

(Note: The following remarks were made by Avraham Rabby, Secretary of the National Federation of the Blind, at the annual convention banquet of the National Federation of the Blind, Minneapolis, Minnesota, July 8, 1982.)

The National Federation of the Blind presents awards very sparingly. Our Special Service Award is given only when an individual or an organization has performed a service of unusual importance or demonstrated understanding of our problems to such a degree that it promises significant improvement in the lives of the blind. Tonight we are making such a presentation. We are giving our Special Service Award. The recipient has earned the award both by performing an important service and by demonstrating to an unusual degree an understanding of our problems and potential. Our Special Service Award goes to the International Telephone and Telegraph Corporation.

As President Jernigan told you earlier in the convention, we have, during the past year (in conjunction with Access for the Handicapped and ITT) been conducting a

project to teach mobility and other skills to the blind of Zambia. We have sent teams of blind persons to do the training, and another team will be going later this summer.

ITT has played a key part in what has come to be known as the “Blind Independence Project for Africa.” They have not only provided the money to make it possible but they have also shown sensitivity and understanding in investing human resources and making the project truly meaningful.

They have made it possible for us to establish in Zambia the first computerized production of Braille in that part of the world. The computer and the Braille printer are being set up at the ITT offices in Zambia, and the operation and maintenance of the machinery will be handled by ITT on an ongoing basis. This will mean that the blind of Zambia can have put into Braille the kind of material that *they* want as opposed to being limited to what has been produced for the blind of other countries overseas and then sent to them as surplus.

Of course, the primary problem faced by

blind people (whether in Zambia or in the United States) is the misconceptions and misunderstandings of the general public. Because the blind are part of the larger society, they tend to share the public misconceptions and contribute to their reinforcement. Compared to the attitudinal problem, the problems associated with blindness itself are small. To the extent that such problems exist (and they do exist), they center around communication and mobility: access to the printed word, and going where you want to go independently.

ITT is helping attack all three of these problems in Zambia: the production of computerized Braille; the provision of the flexible fiberglass canes made by the Federation; and the training of blind persons in their use; and the changing of attitudes by disseminating educational materials to the blind and the general public of Zambia, by sending competent blind persons who can teach by example as well as by precept, and by giving hope for the future. This is what the "Blind Independence Project for Africa" means, and it would be difficult to overemphasize its importance.

But ITT is not just working to help blind people in Africa. They are doing things here in the United States. Undoubtedly the Africa project helped raise their sensitivity, but they are following through on what they have started. As an example, consider the case of Susie Spigle. President Jernigan talked to you about it Tuesday. Susie is one of the leaders of our New York affiliate. She has a degree in hotel management from Cornell University, but she is only employed as a reservations clerk in a Sheraton Hotel. Sheraton is a subsidiary of ITT, which is one of the largest of the multinational corporations. As a result of our work with ITT on the Zambia project, Susie is being given three months leave with pay to

go to Zambia this summer, and ITT has promised that when she gets back, she will be promoted to a job in management. Susie is in the room tonight. This is the kind of progress we are making, and I think there is no doubt that we can count on increasing understanding, support, and job opportunities from the International Telephone and Telegraph Corporation.

We have with us tonight Mr. James I. Nixon, a Vice President of ITT. He is the Director of Equal Opportunity Operations for ITT on a worldwide basis. Mr. Nixon, it is a pleasure to present to you the Special Service Award of the National Federation of the Blind. The plaque reads:

Special Service Award

Presented by the National Federation of the Blind to the International Telephone and Telegraph Corporation. Because of your effort in the Blind Independence Project for Africa you have helped make life better for blind people throughout the world.

July, 1982

In his response, Mr. Nixon said: "We at ITT are certainly aware of the fine work done by your organization both in the United States and abroad. Your national membership of 50,000 blind persons constitutes a vital force in the ongoing quest for increased training and opportunities for blind persons. ITT has long been active in programs for the blind, as well as other handicapped persons. . . .

"In Zambia we hope to provide mobility training to some 2,000 blind persons by early next year. However, the success of the project won't be measured in numbers alone. In fact, numbers tell only a small part of the story. The really important outcome will be manifested in the quality of lives of those who are trained and those

who use the print-to-Braille computer that will be installed in Zambia. If, because of this project, some of those persons will be able to travel back and forth from home to a job or go to a store and shop for themselves—then our investment will have paid off, handsomely indeed. If because of this

project, some people gain a new sense of dignity, then all of our efforts will have been a success. If all of these things happen (as I am confident they will), then we will have made the world a better place for some of our brothers, and this award will take on even greater meaning.”

NEWEL PERRY AWARD

First Vice President Donald Capps presented the Newel Perry Award to Congressman Barry M. Goldwater, Jr. Mr. Capps said:

“Like the Nobel Peace Prize, the Newel Perry Award is granted only as often as outstanding and distinguished accomplishment merits. This highest award is given only to those persons who have made outstanding contributions toward the progress and independence of the nation’s blind. Since the Newel Perry Award is the highest honor, which the organized blind of this country can bestow, it is treated accordingly. It is given sparingly with appropriate care and selectivity.

“The Newel Perry Award has been presented only twice during the past 7 years. This highest recognition bestowed by the nation’s organized blind, is truly reserved for those distinguished Americans who genuinely merit this honor.

“We are very grateful in having the opportunity to honor another distinguished American for meritorious service to the blind. It is with distinct pleasure that we present the Newel Perry Award for 1982 to Honorable Barry M. Goldwater, Jr., distinguished member of the United States Congress. Throughout his outstanding congressional career, Congressman Goldwater has courageously and fearlessly worked for greater independence for the blind of this

nation. Congressman Goldwater fervently believes in the dignity of the blind. He has constantly demonstrated faith in the abilities of the blind. The National Federation of the Blind feels extremely fortunate that Congressman Goldwater has faith and confidence in our great organization, which have enabled him to vigorously pursue those programs espoused by the Federation.

“Undaunted by criticism from those who resist progressive and wholesome change and who are comfortable and secure in the status quo, Congressman Goldwater did not hesitate to join the National Federation of the Blind in our efforts to either reform or destroy the National Accreditation Council for agencies serving the blind and visually handicapped—NAC. Congressman Goldwater recognizes that the National Federation of the Blind stands tall for high standards and meaningful accreditation of meritorious programs which truly serve the needs of the blind in such areas as employment and education, in a fair and responsible manner. The National Federation of the Blind was fortunate in having the active involvement of Congressman Goldwater who personally intervened a few years ago, which resulted in a substantial reduction of NAC’s federal funding. Rather than rely upon aides alone, Congressman Goldwater personally wrote to the General

Accounting Office regarding his concerns about NAC. Recognized for his conservative but always caring philosophy, these qualities have heightened Congressman Goldwater's effectiveness on behalf of the blind.

"On more than one occasion Congressman Goldwater has not waited to be contacted by the National Federation of the Blind, but has taken the initiative in matters vitally impacting upon the lives of the blind. Like millions of Americans, Congressman Goldwater was deeply moved by the Wall Street Journal's front page coverage of the exploitation of thousands of blind workers in many sheltered workshops. Unlike so many who expressed shock and outrage over the Wall Street Journal's expose, but did nothing about the matter, Congressman Goldwater took the initiative and caused a two-year study of the overall sheltered workshop operation to be conducted. Believing in the sound concepts and philosophy of the National Federation of the Blind, and leaning heavily upon its leadership in the programs for the blind, Congressman Goldwater has frequently sat down with Federation leaders to discuss and plan objectives assuring optimum effectiveness.

"On June 3, Congressman Goldwater introduced legislation entitled *Jobs and Business Opportunities for the Handicapped*. This highly important legislation is the culmination of the two-year study initiated by Congressman Goldwater into the sheltered workshop abuses. Having carefully consulted with Federation officials, the legislation introduced by Congressman Goldwater on June 3, addresses the Federation's many concerns about the inequities of the sheltered workshop operations in this country. The legislation is all encompassing and would correct most, if not all, of the ills, including National Industries for the Blind arising out

of the adoption of the Wagner-O'Day Act several decades ago. Congressman Goldwater strongly supports minimum wage for sheltered workshop employees, which he has addressed.

"Thus, we of the National Federation of the Blind, on this July 8, 1982, proudly honor Congressman Barry M. Goldwater, Jr., not only for his understanding and active support, but for much more. We honor him for his understanding of our goals and aspirations as well as our objectives. Congressman Goldwater is not like so many who wish us well and promise us much, but then promptly forget us—who profess deep sympathy for us and our problems, but frequently act with callous indifference toward them. A distinguished American, Congressman Goldwater is our honored colleague and co-worker in our struggle to gain independence and dignity. At this midpoint in his brilliant career, which has been characterized by noble accomplishment and plans for the future, he joins with us to change dreams into reality, believing fully in the concept that all men have the right and need to function to their fullest capacities. Congressman Goldwater, this is why we honor you. We want you to know, we want everyone to know that we thank you for having joined with us on the barricades. As a tangible and lasting expression of our appreciation, it is with deep pleasure that we present this plaque to you inscribed as follows:

"In recognition of courageous leadership and outstanding service, the National Federation of the Blind bestows its highest honor, the Newel Perry Award, upon the Honorable Barry M. Goldwater, Jr., our colleague; our friend; our brother on the barricades—he champions our progress; he strengthens our hopes; he shares our dreams. July, 1982."

Congressman Goldwater responded as follows:

"I thank you from the bottom of my heart. Don Capps, I thank you from the bottom of my heart for those thoughtful words. Dr. Jernigan, I thank you from the bottom of my heart for your inspiration, your leadership. I only wish and hope that every member of the United States Congress, the Administration, the bureaucracy, and the American people could have heard your inspiring message tonight. Ladies and gentlemen, I will accept this award, but in many respects I feel that I am accepting it on your behalf because if it had not been for you (through your spokesmen, Jim Gashel and Sharon Gold who walked into my office and explained the problems that the blind have with the Wagner-O'Day Act), I certainly would not be standing here. You see, the legislative process and problems created by the legislative process are somewhat like the sailing ship on the ocean. Without any wind blowing in the sails, that ship sits still, becalmed. But you, through your Federation and your members, determined that you were mad enough and that you were not going to take it any more. You did something about it, and the squeaky wheel is beginning to get the grease. Let me remind you of the challenge that we face with such an undertaking. Every year in the United States Congress there is introduced in excess of some 25,000 pieces of legislation all competing for the attention of our government. The challenge to us, recognizing the opposition to such an effort to

reform and revise, is to do everything that we can to push this legislation through the Congress and onto the President's desk for signature. It will take the efforts of each and every one of you working in your own Congressional Districts. I would suggest that you make an appointment with your Representative, your Senator. Inform him, guide him, pressure him. I would further suggest that if you cannot get his or her attention, write him a nasty note. Members of Congress are vain. They like to be liked. But only use that as a last resort. This legislation is doable. The facts speak for themselves. The truth will win out, but it will be a hard-fought battle. I know that the Special Assistant to our President, Virginia Knauer, will go to the White House and do what she can do. I know of her sensitivity to the people of this country. Let me, in closing, express my appreciation on behalf of myself and my staff (particularly a young lady in my office, Signey Ellerton, who does all the work and I get the credit) we thank you. I certainly understand what an honor it is to receive it.

"You know the fabric of my life has been woven with many friends and in many colors by all of the people I have been privileged to know. I suspect that when St. Peter asks me what the wild yellows and soaring reds and the beautiful blues are in my fabric, I'm going to tell him this: These, among life's brightest colors, came from my friends in the National Federation of the Blind. They didn't see them with their eyes, but rather gave them to me with their hearts. Thank you."

THE JACOBUS TEN BROEK AWARD

Jim Onvig presented the Jacobus tenBroek award to Diane and Ray McGeorge. He spoke as follows:

Then a plowman said, "Speak to us of work."

And the Prophet answered saying, "... work is love made visible."

I believe the Prophet could also have said, "Giving is love made visible." For love expressed but not demonstrated by hard work and through generous giving is not love at all.

No individual in the history of the National Federation of the Blind has loved more, worked harder, or given more generously of time, talent, energy, or resources than our beloved founder, Dr. Jacobus tenBroek. Our presence here tonight is, in one sense, a signal recognition of the dedication, commitment, and love exemplified in the life and work of Dr. tenBroek. He was an orator noted for his eloquence, a thinker noted for his wisdom, and a leader noted for his accomplishment.

His dedication, commitment, and love were the powerful forces which brought hope into the barren world of the blind 42 years ago, and which showed the way for the founding of the organized blind movement.

These personal characteristics—dedication, commitment, and love—which distinguished Dr. tenBroek from his colleagues and peers in his private, public, and professional life have provided the foundation for the Federation life-style which we live each day throughout the nation.

We have been extremely fortunate throughout the history of the organized

blind movement to have been blessed with leaders possessing these characteristics. Dr. Jernigan, like Dr. tenBroek before him, has taken up the torch and led the blind of America into a new era—an era marked by self-reliance and carried forward by self-determination. In Dr. Jernigan, like Dr. tenBroek, we also find dedication, commitment, love, eloquence, wisdom, and accomplishment.

It is in recognition of the powerful impact of Dr. tenBroek's life upon all of us that we have established the Jacobus tenBroek Award. This Award is only to be presented to Federationists, (to front-line soldiers in the movement) who, through their dedication, commitment, and love, have made a substantial contribution to the progress of the blind toward equality and first-class citizenship.

This Award is not an automatic, annual one. Rather, it is to be presented only as often as a Federationist merits it by exemplifying through his or her life-style those special traits which distinguished Dr. tenBroek.

This year, for the first time, the Jacobus tenBroek Award is being presented to two individuals, not one. For it would not be fitting to recognize one member of this outstanding team and to fail to recognize the contributions of the other. It is difficult to find Federationists who have demonstrated more public spirit, more zeal for the cause, or more unselfish dedication to the movement than have these two individuals.

Their lives, also, exemplify those special traits of dedication, commitment, and love which symbolize the life and leadership of Dr. tenBroek. Both in the movement and

out, they are leaders with capacity, citizens with conviction, and fighters with determination.

In addition to having successful careers, these team members have raised two fine children and have still found the time to be church and civic leaders. They have been long-time members of the Federation, but assumed real leadership a decade ago.

They serve the Federation in a variety of ways: Both are strong leaders at the local and state levels, and both stand tall among national leadership. When the call goes out for action, both are willing to do what has to be done. Both give freely of themselves and share their love, and both are deeply loved in return.

It is a privilege of a very special order to present the 1982 Jacobus tenBroek Award to these front-line soldiers in the move-

ment, to our distinguished colleagues and our friends, Diane and Ray McGeorge.

Diane and Ray, I now present to you this engraved plaque which reads:

*National Federation of the Blind
Jacobus tenBroek Award
presented to
Diane and Ray McGeorge
July 8, 1982*

For your dedication, commitment, and sacrifice on behalf of the blind of the nation. Your contributions must be measured not in steps, but by miles; not by individual experiences but by your impact on the lives of the blind of this generation. Whenever we have asked, you have answered. We call you our colleagues with respect; we call you our friends with love.

BLINDNESS: SIMPLICITY, COMPLEXITY, AND THE PUBLIC MIND

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED BY

KENNETH JERNIGAN

PRESIDENT, NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND
AT THE BANQUET OF THE ANNUAL CONVENTION

Minneapolis, July 8, 1982

Not long ago I read a science fiction story which began like this: The ambassador from the 22nd to the 21st century stood on the balcony and surveyed the city. His expression seemed to say: "All things are simple and likely to become more so."

The story ended like this: The ambassador from the 23rd to the 22nd century stood on the balcony and surveyed the city. His expression seemed to say: "All things are complex and likely to become more so."

Tonight the National Federation of the Blind is forty-two years old. That is a considerable time in the life of a person or a movement. It is more than a generation—almost half a century. In the world at large it has brought unbelievable change. In the lives of the blind it has been the turning point, the pivotal period of all history. The principal reason (the new element—the crucial factor) has been the National Federation of the Blind.

When we organized in 1940, our problems were comparatively simple. Very few blind people had jobs or the means of get-

ting jobs, and most thought it was fate—not mistaken public attitudes or lack of opportunity or social conditioning. After all, the thinking went, common sense is common sense. A blind person (any blind person) cannot expect to compete for a job (any job) on terms of equality (real equality) with a sighted person (any sighted person). It was that inclusive and that bad.

And as it was with employment so it was with everything else. We could not participate socially, could not have regular family life, could not raise children, could not manage our own homes, could not live alone, could not engage in normal recreation, could not travel unaccompanied, could not handle money (such of it as we had), could not eat with grace, could not take part in civic affairs, could not plan our own activities, and could not govern our own lives. Things were done *to* the blind and sometimes *for* the blind—but rarely ever *by* the blind. It was not expected or allowed. The blind, being part of the broader society, tended to see themselves as others saw them. We tended to accept the public view of our limitations, and thus did much to make those limitations a reality.

When the average member of the public thought about blindness at all, it was usually with sympathy and pity. Society's communication link with the blind was the network of governmental and private sheltered workshops, social service agencies, and charitable institutions established (as the ordinary person would have put it) "to take care of the blind." The federal-state rehabilitation programs did not regard us as employable; the public assistance features of the Social Security Act were still new and relatively insignificant; and the army of psychologists, social workers, and technocrats was yet to be created. There were a few libraries for the blind, a limited number of state-operated sheltered workshops, and a scattering of private charitable foundations; but almost without exception these institutions were custodial in nature, limited in scope, and lacking in concepts of freedom and human dignity.

In this atmosphere (in the world of 1940) the prospects were bleak and uncomplicated; and the problems faced by the founders of our movement (though monumental in nature) were equally bleak and uncomplicated: try to get enough for the blind to eat, get people to recognize us as human beings, and reform the agencies. So it was in 1940! But never again! No more! We are beyond that! That was another time and another era. We have learned who we are, and we will never go back.

Today (forty-two years later) the world is a different place. We have organized and are a force in the land, but our problems (far from being diminished) are multiplied and magnified—a sure sign of our growth and progress. All things are complex and likely to become more so. The agencies have grown to such numbers and bigness

that they threaten to control not only every aspect of our lives but also of our thoughts as well. As the National Federation of the Blind has become more powerful, many of our own have infiltrated the agency establishment and now often find themselves tempted to dilute their commitment and avoid the call of conscience. How much for the freedom of the blind, and how much for personal advancement and the weekly paycheck? Even more difficult, how to be certain that the decision is totally honest and free from rationalization?

Once the agencies were simple—minimal in service and few in staff. They gave us little: a broom and a brush-off, a sandwich and a sermon. But that little was at least easy to understand. It was the handout of the master to the slave.

The bigness has brought complexity. Many of the agencies have now acquired vast wealth and have changed their focus from service (even if only charitable and condescending service) to the protection of their own vested interests, and growth for the sake of growth. Whereas, in 1940 they ignored us as unimportant, they now regard us as dangerous and act accordingly. They try to buy our most promising leaders, and try to ruin and discredit the ones they cannot buy.

But this is only half of the story, only part of the picture; for as the ambassador from the 23rd century observed, "All things are complex and likely to become more so." Not all of the agencies follow destructive patterns. As a result of our efforts, an increasing number are responding to the call and working with us. Many of our members who have joined the agencies have not sold out but have strengthened

their commitment and brought vigor and newness to the task.

There is also another element of complexity. It has to do with the current economic climate and the past behavior of the agencies. In the 1950's the agency establishment had a good reputation and high credibility both with Congress and the Executive Branch of government, but during the past twenty-five years much of that trust has evaporated. There have been too many abuses, too many nonservice-related staff members added, too many unkept promises, too many games played with statistics, too many dollars spent without results, and too much bigness and arrogance and failure to respond. With this heritage the agencies have not fared well under scrutiny in the atmosphere of shrinking dollars and the economic difficulties of the 1980's.

Again, though, there is complexity. Some of the agencies have tightened their belts, looked for ways to increase their efficiency, and sought partnership with the blind in getting Congress and the state legislatures to provide needed funds. Others have tried to continue in the old ways. Instead of partnership they have tried scare tactics. They have attempted to frighten the blind into unquestioning and unconditional support—no reform, no distinction between good and bad programs, and no participation in policy or planning. As I need not remind you, the scare tactics have not worked. We are neither cattle to be herded nor slaves to be driven. It will either be partnership as equals and joint effort, or it will be nothing.

Once upon a time a horse and a man were both being attacked by a wolf. The man said to the horse, "I have hands and skill with weapons. You have speed and

strength. Therefore, let us join forces to rid ourselves of this menace. Of course, I will have to put a bridle and saddle on you and ride on your back, but if we work together, we can be free."

The horse agreed, and they hunted and killed the wolf. Then the horse said, "Now we are free. Take off the saddle and bridle, and let us rejoice in our liberty."

To which (as he drove in the spurs) the man answered, "The hell you say! Giddyap, Dobbin." The wolf may stand at the agencies' door, but this does not mean that we will allow ourselves to be bridled and saddled.

We are not opposed to all agencies, nor do we fail to understand and appreciate the constructive work which many of them have done. We are only saying that all things are complex and likely to become more so. We want partnership and cooperation, not threats and oppression. We will do what we have to do and take what risks we have to take to achieve full citizenship and equal status in society. We have learned our lessons well, and others should also learn; for we know who we are, and we will never go back.

The complexity is not merely with the agencies but also with us. With the strengthening of our movement and growing opportunity we have followed the path of other minorities. Some of us have attempted to hide in the larger sighted community, pretending that we have "made it on our own," and that we have reaped no benefit from the movement and, thus, have no obligation to it. Like some of the blacks of forty years ago, those of us who have taken this road have (figuratively speaking) tried to straighten our hair and

lighten our skins—attempting to cross the color line and deny our heritage. But it did not work then, and it will not work now. Either we the blind are equal as a people, or not a single one of us will cross the line to first-class status. This is the message and the truth of our movement—and it cannot and will not be denied. We know who we are, and we will never go back.

Our battle for freedom and recognition parallels to a striking degree that experienced by the blacks, for we are (in every modern sense of the term) a minority. We have our ghettos, our unemployment, our underemployment, and our Uncle Toms. We have our establishment (composed of society as a whole and, particularly, of many of the professionals in the governmental and private agencies). That establishment condescendingly loves us if we stay in our places, and bitterly resents us if we strive for equality. Above all (through our own organization, the National Federation of the Blind) we have discovered our collective conscience and found our true identity. We have learned that it is not our blindness which has put us down and kept us out, but what we and others have thought about our blindness. Yet, they tell us that there is no discrimination and that we are not a minority. We want no strife or confrontation, but we will do what we have to do. We are simply no longer willing to be second-class citizens. We understand the complexity. We know who we are, and we will never go back.

The ambassador from the 23rd century was right: All things are complex and likely to become more so. But the ambassador from the 22nd century was also right, for all things are simple and likely to remain so. Our basic problem in 1940 was society's misconceptions and misunderstandings.

That is still our problem today. The agencies, being part of society, take their attitudes from it (despite their claims of professionalism to the contrary), and when we have reformed society, we will also have reformed the agencies. Likewise, our own attitudes are affected by society—but here there is a difference. In 1940 we were not organized and had not yet developed our philosophy, planned our public education campaigns, worked to eliminate our own false beliefs and misconceptions, or started the slow process of bringing society to new ways of perceiving and understanding. For the blind of the country, the greatest single difference between 1940 and today (and it is a tremendous difference) is the fact of the National Federation of the Blind—our concerted effort, our carefully thought out philosophy, our mutual encouragement and assistance, and our absolute determination to achieve first-class citizenship. Yes, we have learned it the hard way—but we have learned it. We know who we are, and we will never go back.

With respect to public attitudes we still have a long way to go. We can begin with things around the house—like bathing. Sometime ago I received a letter which said:

Your organization has been recommended as one which may be able to take advantage of a valuable new safety product designed to improve bathing safety for the blind and the handicapped.

The Safety Shower Guard and Safety Tub Guard are low-cost, easily installed products which will stop the flow of water in a bathing area if the temperature becomes too hot for comfort or safety. When the temperature returns to a safe level, flow is automatically allowed to resume.

These products have received the acceptance of

the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and conform to ASTM Standard F - 444 Consumer Safety Specification for Scald-Preventing Devices.

I must confess that it never occurred to me that looking at the water might keep me from getting burned or that I might have need of a Scald-Preventing Device. I had always thought that when the burned child feared the fire, it was because of touch, not sight.

But let us leave the tub and go to the washing machine. A recent publication of the Maytag Corporation tells of the advances the Company is making to change their appliances so that, as they put it, their products "can be used by visually disabled persons." The trouble here is the emphasis. I have never in my life known a single blind person who could not learn to use an ordinary washing machine with a minimal amount of effort, and surely it is no great "advance" (worthy of a special announcement) to add a few markings to the dials or the buttons.

But Sears goes Maytag one better. In the summer of 1981 it distributed a colorful flyer with this grabber as a headline: "So the Blind May See." The text that follows is equally dramatic. It reads like this:

To many people, doing the laundry is a boring chore. And for millions of sight-impaired people operating a washing machine, adjusting an air conditioner, or cooking in a microwave oven can be a difficult chore. This fall, Sears will offer Braille overlays for the controls of several Kenmore appliances, opening new worlds to those with vision impairments.

Again, the problem is with the emphasis and the implication. Braille overlays (which we can easily make for ourselves if we want

them) may offer some negligible convenience, but surely they do not open up "new worlds to those with visual impairments." If so, our scope is limited, indeed.

In April of this year the Oster Division of the Sunbeam Corporation wrote me to ask whether it would be (as they put it) "safe" to permit their materials to be transcribed into Braille for use by the blind. Here is what they said:

Oster, Division of Sunbeam Corporation, manufactures household appliances. We occasionally receive requests from libraries for permission to transcribe our instruction literature into Braille. We would be pleased to comply with these requests, but we are concerned that a direct transcription of the text may not meet the specific needs of a blind user.

Since we lack the expertise to make this judgment, we are asking you to review several of our instruction booklets. In determining if the instructions are adequately organized and sufficiently detailed to teach a blind person to safely operate the appliance, please assume that the Braille copy would be a literal transcription of the original.

I responded that blind people throughout the country use power blenders every day without hazard and that it would be perfectly safe to transcribe the instructions (unaltered) into Braille. So far as I know, that settled the weighty matter, and even now the Braille may be in process.

The public misconceptions about blindness are so bizarre and so much at variance with common sense that they would be laughable if they were not so damaging. Several months ago the Italian Trade Commissioner to this country sent me a press release: "ITALIAN HOUSEHOLD APPLIANCE MADE FOR THE BLIND" it proclaimed. "A leading Italian appliance

manufacturer has announced that it has initiated the production of a completely automatic dishwasher and stove specially made for the blind. These appliances are equipped with special devices and acoustic signals which allow the blind to control the machine at any particular moment."

In an accompanying letter the Trade Commissioner said: "We would appreciate receiving a copy of any coverage that will eventually be published in your magazine." Since blind people can use ordinary stoves and dishwashers without difficulty (their only problem usually being having the money to buy such items, a problem partially caused by the false image created by the very kind of press release I have just read), and since I intend to print these remarks in the *Monitor*, I wonder whether the Trade Commissioner would really like to have them. Or would he simply be amazed, angry, and bewildered by it all?

As the ambassador from the 23rd century said, "All things are complex and likely to become more so"; but as the ambassador from the 22nd century observed, "All things are simple." Either way you take it, we know how to operate dishwashers and stoves, and we know how to avoid being scalded or cut by the blender. We also know that eyesight and intelligence have nothing to do with each other, but (unbelievable though it sounds) there are those who apparently do not.

On December 12, 1981, the *Portland (Oregon) Daily Journal of Commerce* carried an article headlined "Optometric Business Broadens Its Vision." In view of the text of the article the headline is particularly ironic. The Northwest Congress of Optometry was meeting in Portland, and one of their featured speakers was a man named

Allen Pyeatt. This Dr. Pyeatt is clearly no run-of-the-mill person. As the newspaper quotes him: "We're not just people interested in examining eyes and selling glasses."

Well, then, what is he interested in? We are not left in doubt. Under the subheadline "Intellectual Correlation" he tells us:

In a more general sense, Pyeatt is also involved with the performance of children. But he focuses on recently-formulated premises in the fields of optometry and education that optimal vision capacity is directly related to optimal intellectual capacity.

Pyeatt explains the developments historically covering the evolution of psychological research on intelligence. As the psychological community began to abandon the Stanford-Binet measurement of a presumably constant, unalterable intelligence quotient, the idea that intelligence can be developed and changed emerged.

With that new premise, optometry began to assert its role. 'We know vision can be trained,' says Pyeatt. 'If a person has a vision problem and we improve his vision, it will help him function better intellectually.'

The scientific support of such an idea is in the fact that training of any kind increases brain weight. Thus, eye training will generally affect brain capacity, Pyeatt explains.

'It's sort of like weight lifting,' Pyeatt says. 'You start small and work up.'

Broadened vision, indeed! This pseudo professional double talk is not science but old-fashioned witchcraft straight out of the middle ages. All I know to say to it is this: Let Dr. Pyeatt pick a hundred people from his convention, and we will pick a hundred from ours. Then, let the two groups stand head to head in mental contest and intellectual agility, and I think the optometrists will get a new vision. Or, we might simply

say to Dr. Pyeatt: "The same to you, brother."

With such misinformation being dispensed in the name of science, it is no wonder that the blind face discrimination in employment. Mary Ann Overbey is a blind teacher with a master's degree in child development. She lives in Boulder, Colorado. In 1979 she applied for a position in a preschool day care center operated by the Boulder YWCA. The State Department of Social Services indicated that they would not license the center if Miss Overbey was employed.

At this stage the Boulder Chapter of the Federation helped Miss Overbey find a lawyer and began to ask questions. As might have been expected, the Department of Social Services (when called to task) tried to shift the blame. They called on the fire department.

And what, one may ask, does the fire department have to do with it? Well, apparently a great deal. Under date of August 13, 1979, Clifford S. Harvey (Assistant Chief of the Boulder Fire Department) wrote to Miss Overbey's lawyer as follows:

This letter is to acknowledge that there are, to the best of my knowledge, no Fire Department policies, Life Safety Code, or Fire Prevention Code requirements prohibiting or restricting the employment of a blind teacher in a day care facility. The concern of the Fire Department is with the adequacy of the structure and associated and/or necessary equipment for a special purpose or occupancy. Any suggestion by this Department that we would take action against a day care center for whomever they employed would have been in error.

However, all involved should understand that, although there is no direct reference in our

codes to a blind person being unable to perform a job as a teacher in a day care facility, the Life Safety Code does express concern with exit signs being 'readily visible,' 'distinctive color,' 'contrast with decorations'; the size of the exit sign 'not less than 6 inches high with the principal strokes of letters not less than 3/4 inch wide,' and the illumination of the sign 'by a reliable light source giving a value of not less than 5 foot candles on the illuminated surface.' Emergency lighting is required when the area used is subject to loss of natural and artificial light during hours of supervision. All these requirements are obviously aimed at people who are able to use their sight/vision to react to any emergency.

What a letter! As Alice said in her trip through Wonderland, it all gets curiouser and curiouser. According to the logic of Mr. Harvey blind persons would be prohibited from crossing streets, because the signs and lights are obviously meant for the sighted. Likewise, blind persons could not work in lighted factories, attend lighted schools, or (for that matter) even live in their own homes—assuming that their homes are lighted, which is probably a building code requirement in most localities.

No review of the present condition of the blind would be complete without some discussion of the airlines. Twenty years ago there were relatively few blind passengers, but there were also virtually no problems. Blind people were treated like everybody else. They sat where they chose, kept their canes with them if they liked, and generally traveled without incident.

Then, as an increasing number of us began to find employment and self-confidence, more of us began to travel on airplanes, and otherwise participate in the mainstream of daily life. As always happens

when a minority moves from dependence toward first-class citizenship, we experienced a certain amount of hostility and resentment. The problem was augmented by the fact that other handicapped groups and minorities were also striving and seeking advancement. Suddenly the airlines became very much aware of the disabled—not just the blind or some other group but *all* of the disabled. And they went about it in the worst possible way. They seemingly took all of the problems which they conceived each group of the disabled to have and attributed all of them to each of us. The resulting picture was a helpless, pitiable monstrosity.

Seven or eight years ago the Federal Aviation Administration decided to make special rules for us—limiting the number of blind persons who could travel on a single flight, providing that we must sit in certain segregated sections of the plane, and generally restricting our freedom of movement. By letters to Congress, confrontations at airports, and testimony at public hearings throughout the country we opposed these regulations, and they were never put into effect. However, by the late 1970's all sorts of restrictive measures were being undertaken by the airlines. It started with insistence that we give up our canes during flight, and it went from there to the bizarre and the ridiculous. Only now are we beginning to prevail in the struggle, but some of the madness still lingers.

In February of this year Frontier Airlines publicly humiliated and verbally abused our Colorado President, Diane McGeorge, because she did not want to move from her assigned seat to the bulkhead area—where, they said, she and her dog Pony would be “more comfortable.” They relented only after asking the other

passengers in the row whether they objected to having Diane sit by them. In response to a letter from our attorney, Frontier took an injured tone and said that they had led the way in promoting the rights of the blind. They even claimed to have been the ones responsible for getting the Federal Aviation Administration to repeal its regulation prohibiting us from keeping our canes with us at our seats during flight. The way I remember it, we of the National Federation of the Blind filed the lawsuit.

As conclusive proof of their respect for our rights, Frontier pointed to a Braille flight information brochure which they have prepared for blind passengers. The brochure is, indeed, conclusive, but not in the way that Frontier imagines. It says in part:

You have been seated in an area that will help us make a safe and rapid evacuation. We ask that you *remain seated until the initial flow of passengers has passed you*. By permitting other passengers to evacuate first, we will be in a better position to help you, if necessary.

(Let me interrupt to say that I, for one, don't buy it. If I happen to be on an airplane in time of emergency, I have no intention of sitting there passively until everybody else has left the plane and Frontier's flight personnel have come back to get me. How do I know that they will not panic in the turmoil and give first priority to looking out for themselves—or (even if they don't) that it won't be too late by the time everybody else is off? If there is an emergency, I will take my chance with the rest of the passengers. That is why I keep both my cane and my wits with me when I fly.)

But back to the Frontier brochure. It goes on to say:

If you have chosen not to fly with your own escort, please understand that the flight attendants are not obligated to extend services beyond that required by all other passengers. In addition, you are responsible for your own lavatory needs; flight attendants are not able to assist.

Welcome aboard and have a pleasant flight.

What do you suppose they have in mind with respect to assisting with our lavatory needs? As the ambassador from the 23rd century said: All things are complex and likely to become more so.

Southwest Airlines recently issued a "Clarification of Passenger Tariff Rule 10 Refusal To Transport," which says in part:

Mental or physical conditions such as deaf, blind, mute, or retarded renders the individual incapable of caring for himself without assistance enroute and definitely would require further attention or assistance from employees of carrier—such as, blind could not read instructions, fasten seat belts, signs, change planes unassisted, or help himself in an emergency. Any one of or combination of the above certainly could involve risk to himself or to other persons or to property in the event of any non routine situation if he became frightened. All personnel must be alert to these situations and use good judgement and tact when having to decline acceptance of these people.

The Station Counter Manual for Pacific Southwest says:

When accepting unaccompanied blind persons for passage, every effort should be made to determine tactfully the extent of the passenger's helplessness. If the passenger is completely helpless, it should be recommended that he not travel alone. On the other hand, if the passenger seems well-adjusted and experienced in taking care of himself, traveling alone will not be too difficult.

Arrangements should be made to assist the blind passenger in boarding the airplane, and ensuring that he is seated next to a person of the same sex to take advantage of the latter person's probably voluntary efforts to assist the blind person.

What do you think they expect the person of the same sex to assist the blind person in doing? If they intend for it to stop at the lavatory door, it really won't matter which sex is helping—will it? As the ambassador from the 22nd century said, All things are simple and likely to become more so.

To top it all, an Eastern Airlines Flight Attendant named Claudia recently decided not to bother trying to get the blind passenger to the lavatory at all. She insisted that he sit on a blanket because, as she put it, it is a federal regulation that blind persons have to sit on blankets because they cannot control their bladders. Of course, the blind person refused and pointed out that there is not (and never has been) any such federal regulation, but there was a scene involving public humiliation and embarrassment. There was also the likelihood of a lawsuit. All one can say to such insanity is: Welcome aboard, Claudia, and have a pleasant flight.

And then there is sex. The Andrew Clinic in New York has sent me a letter saying that it provides specialized sex therapy for a number of groups, including the blind, the amputee, and the obese. I often wonder how some of these classifications get made.

At any rate, the letter from the Andrew Clinic begins by saying: "Dear Director of the Federation; Please feel free to disseminate this announcement." Well, all right.—let's disseminate it. It says in part:

Therapy is conducted either in our OFFICE or at HOME. Therapy modality: empirical. ... Fees: \$250 for 12 sessions for 2 people, \$150 for 12 sessions for singles without surrogate, \$300 for 12 sessions for singles with an assigned surrogate. Please write or call for detailed information about qualifications, co-therapists, available consultants, or the rules about the assignment of a surrogate. Hoping to hear from you, I remain Cordially yours; Adalbert B. Vajay, MD. Ph.D.

It has been my observation that we do not need professional therapists to teach us about the basics—or, for that matter, to help us enjoy them—So welcome aboard, Adalbert, and have a pleasant flight.

Where does all of this leave us? For one thing (although we treat it with derision) it is not funny. It blights our lives, limits our opportunities, and kills our dreams. It depicts a social climate and a public attitude which bring misery and suffering. It bars us from regular employment and forces us to the degradation and poverty of subminimum wages and sheltered shops.

The state of Utah runs such a shop, and it is notorious. On July 27, 1981, a blind woman wrote to the Director of Utah's Services for the Blind:

Dear Dr. Langford: I am writing this letter in protest to tell my complaint about the workshop. At the time I was working there, I was transferred from one job to another from day to day without any explanation as to why, and therefore, I could not pick up good speed.

At the time of my dismissal, Mr. May told me I could work for thirty-eight cents a day. I was deeply hurt and very upset, and I went home and cried for several hours.

The following day my counselor, Dianne Alexander, told me that I could go to ReWall

[ReWall is a training facility] on July 6, 1981, for re-evaluation. I did go there. I cooperated on everything they asked me to do, EXCEPT I would not answer one certain question dealing with my SEX LIFE.

While at ReWall, Diane, Richard, and Bill told me I could work for sixty-eight cents a day. Dianne Alexander—Rehab. Counselor, Bill—ReWall Counselor, Richard—ReWall Instructor.

The next day I confronted Mr. May with this message—of working for sixty-eight cents a day. He just stood there and said nothing. I asked him then if I could return to work. He told me that they were not hiring anybody. Again, I became more upset than ever. I went home and cried and cried and cried. I did not know what to do or who to turn to.

Finally I decided to call my Counselor, Dianne Alexander. I told her what Mr. May had said. She told me to report to work on Monday and Tuesday, July 27 and 28, 1981, at 9:00 a.m. for a period of six weeks, at a \$1.55 per hour. I was very grateful to hear this good news, as it will be of some help for our family.

Dr. Langford, I would like to tell you about one of the worst things going on at the Utah Workshop, the foulest language!! The lead man sits there and converses with others in very foul language, where everyone must sit and listen to it. He calls the workers' children 'Little Bastards.' When called down on it by the workers, he told us if we didn't like it, we could leave. While I was at ReWall, Bill told me that I would have to put up with it—and not let it bother me. But it does bother me.

While working in the broom shop I sorted better than 200 pounds of corn per day.

Dr. Langford, I would like to know why I have been dismissed. There are several others that were hired after I was, and they are still working there. Dr. Langford, I was at work every day—on time and never late. ...

My husband and I have 2 small dependent children of school age. Without me working full time, I don't know how we can make it with the high cost of living these days.

Dr. Langford, knowing your position, you might be able to help me get my job back. I would appreciate hearing from you.

Pain and agony come from every line of that letter. It speaks of hurt and misery that cannot be described but only experienced. She is grateful for a \$1.55 per hour and is so desperate for help that she begs to be allowed to return to a place where she must constantly hear her two small children referred to as "little bastards." If this were an isolated instance, it would be bad enough, but it is not. It is commonplace—repeated over and over throughout the country. It is no exaggeration to say that many of the blind today live in what can only be called slavery.

But we have learned to fight back, and we are making progress. As a result of our efforts an increasing number of the agencies are adopting new ways and responding to us positively, and so are the members of the public-at-large. It is true that the conditions in the sheltered shops are still unbelievably bad, but it is also true that we have succeeded in getting the National Labor Relations Board to take jurisdiction over the shops and affirm the right of blind workers to organize and bargain collectively. When the Cincinnati Association for the Blind (one of the worst sheltered shops in the country) appealed the NLRB ruling, the federal Court decided in our favor. The Court decision (which was handed down only a few months ago) is as much a testimonial to how far we have come in reforming public attitudes and how successful our educational campaigns have been as it is to the provisions of the law and the enlight-

enment of the judges. The Cincinnati Association has indicated that it will carry the matter to the Supreme Court of the United States, and it certainly has the money to do it—money wrung from the sweat of exploited blind workers; money extracted from a charitable public, which is only beginning to understand; money gleaned from tax exemptions and federal subsidies. However, even if we should lose the next round of appeals, the fact still remains that even ten years ago the NLRB and federal Court rulings would have been impossible. In a single decade we have made more progress than in all previous history.

Between February and June of this year our Job Opportunities for the Blind program assisted more than fifty people in finding competitive employment at a rate above the minimum wage, and this was done at a time when unemployment among the general public was running at record levels. It is no exaggeration to say that today more blind people are employed at higher wages than ever before in human experience.

And it is not just in employment that we are making gains, but in other areas as well. The airlines are a good example. Bad as the situation still is, there are definite signs of progress. Last fall I went to Atlanta at the invitation of Delta to make a training film for its employees, and United (which four or five years ago was one of the most insensitive) recently removed objectionable advertising from radio and television because we asked them to do it. And not more than two weeks ago, Frontier Airlines sent one of their top officials to sit down with me at the National Center and they promised that they would remove those brochures I have just read to you. They

also promised that they would join with us in having Federationists come and work in training their staff.

In every area we are gaining momentum, and tomorrow is bright with promise. As the sighted learn who we are, what we have endured, what we are achieving, and what we can do, they are standing with us in growing numbers. We are capable of living with the sighted, working with the sighted, playing with the sighted, and competing with the sighted on terms of full equality; and the sighted are capable of reciprocating and understanding.

Most important of all, we have found our collective identity and understood what it means to work together as a movement. We have made our Federation the strongest force which has ever existed to improve the lot of the blind. Today not only our own members but all of the blind

(those who are not part of us, those who have never heard of us, and even those who dislike us) are living better lives and reaching for higher goals than ever before—and they are doing it because of the National Federation of the Blind. No force in the world can now stop our advance to freedom. We understand our heritage, and it gives us strength for the battles ahead. We fight for those who went before us and for those who come after—for the founders of our movement and for the children of the next generation. We also fight for ourselves—for our right to full citizenship and human dignity, for our right to equality under the law, and for our right to work with others and do for ourselves.

My brothers and my sisters, the future is ours. It only remains for us to do the work and make the sacrifice and show the courage to win it. Come! Join me on the barricades, and we will make it all come true!

THE BRAILLE MONITOR

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